

# EMINENT INDIANS



M. K. Gandhi



# EMINENT INDIANS

*Edited by*  
ERMINE A BROWN., M. A.



'SHANTI MITRA  
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## FOREWORD

So truly applicable to India are Mr. Winston Churchill's words, "Never in the world of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few." The conscious growth of Indian nationalism has been possible because of the unwearied efforts of eminent men and women in all the aspects of nationhood. While the great masses of the four hundred million exist in their old ways, a few have proved themselves leaders and men of stirring qualities whose endeavours and achievements are worthy of man's upward stride to perfection.

New doctrine and theories have engaged these politicians and historians and louder than all war-notes is Mahatma Gandhi's creed of 'Non-violence'. Practicable or not, no other creed has offered so great a challenge to man's mode of life since the advent of Christianity. While the ingenious barristers like Sir Tej Bhaḍur Sapru puzzled over the constitutional issues of the land, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu writes her Indian love lyrics and the Tagore family enrich the art and literature of India. As human as their fellow men, faltering and failing at critical times attacking where a retreat would have reduced the opponent, and often stubborn in their views so as to paralyse a whole nation, they yet appear giants in the magnitude of their accomplishments. Prepossessed as India is with the idea of national independence, to these leaders she has maintained an international status and a growing prominence in the affairs of the East. Feeble and inadequate seem the efforts to appraise the works of these eminent personalities. When time has tempered man's perspective and History writes

her records there shall still be an honoured place for them. No loaded epithets can read more effectively than their lives which ought to illumine the path of life for four hundred million in India. The leaders in Science and Medicine tell again the old stories of adventure and mercy. The workers with pen and brush give men a glimpse of beauty and truth in a land of poverty and ignorance. Though increasingly proud of their mother-tongue they have not failed to master the subtleties of English and the Western arts. Each in his own way has dedicated his life to the interpretation of a vision and an idea. Confused and floundering the people look up to them and once again the history of a nation is read in the lives of its great men.

Ermine A. Brown, M. A.

## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The Publishers while bringing out the present volume feel that they owe a few words to the reading public by way of introduction. In the first place, as would appear from a cursory glance at the contents, the book tries to reflect all shades of activities of our national life, viz.,—politics, art, literature, law, science, and social service. Attempts have been made to blend together the choicest flowers of the Indian garden and put them in a suitable form which will attract the eyes of all at home and abroad. Much has been said about these men, much more has been known about them ; but to see them gather under one platform is surely something which all of us aspire. In the second place, the exclusion of the lives of some of the guiding stars of our country does not in any way mean the Publishers' dislike or disrespect for them in as much as it has been the sole object of the Publishers to present before the readers the maximum number of eminent Indians : on the contrary, the lives of such personalities like Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Master Tara Singh, Mrs. Vijaylakshmi Pandit and others have been left out only because space prevented the Publishers from including these lives. The Publishers however, take this opportunity of assuring the readers that these lives and many more like them will appear in the next volume which is in their contemplation.

The life of Shri Subhash Chandra Bose has been deliberately omitted. His life has been a landmark between two Indias,—India of the past generation, emasculated, downtrodden, enervated, lying low before the hand of tyranny of the 'intruder master' and the present India revived from its slumber, burning

with the fire of patriotism, born out of the miseries of a forced belligerency. His life is a turning point of India's destiny, of a conflict between two different ideologies each opposed to the other. For many other reasons along with these, the Publishers consider that his life cannot be dealt with within a short compass and so has left out the same from the purview of the present volume.

Biographies in our country are seldom found to be classed among the best-sellers ; but the interest for such work must be created. Moreover, good, authentic biographies which may appeal to the ordinary literate minds are so few in number that their presence in the book-shelf is seldom felt. So biographies are necessary-publications. With such a view, the Publishers of the present volume have undertaken the publication. They have endeavoured to their utmost to make this a sign-post in the road of Indian publications. The best judge of their efforts will be those for whom the book is brought out. They are the teeming millions of India.

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## CONTENTS

Foreword	Page
Arabinda Ghosh	180
By Prof. Bhola Banerjee, M.A.)	
Abanindranath Tagore	165
By Sudhakar Chatterji, M.A.)	
Abdul Gaffar Khan	91
By Sunilkumar Mitra, M.A.)	
Bhulabhai Desai	183
By Ranajit Ghosh, M.A., B.L.)	
Bidhanchandra Roy	200
By Prof. Karuna Gupta, M.A.)	
B. D. Savarkar	101
By Sudhakar Chatterjee, M.A.)	
Jawaharlal Nehru	40
By Sunilkumar Mitra, M.A.)	
Meghnad Saha	191
By Debidas Bose, M.Sc.)	
Maulana Azad	53
By M. A. Alavi, M.A., LL.B.)	
M. A. Jinnah	28
By P. R. Menon, LL.B.)	
M. K. Gandhi	1
By Prof. Amarbandhu Roychoudhury, M.A., B.L.)	
Madan Mohan Malaviya	121
By Sunilkumar Mitra, M.A.)	
Rajendra Prasad	79
By P. R. Menon, LL.B.)	
Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan	143
By Prof. Bhola Banerjee, M.A.)	

<b>Syama Prasad Mookerjee</b>	...	... 173
(By Prof. Amarbandhu Roychoudhury, M.A., B.L.)		
<b>Sarat Chandra Bose</b>	...	... 17
(By Ranajit Ghosh, M.A., B.L.)		
<b>Sarojini Naidu</b>	...	... 208
(By Prof. Bhola Banerjee, M.A.)		
<b>Tej Bahadur Sapru</b>	...	... 110
(By Ranajit Ghosh, M.A., B.L.)		
<b>Vallabhbhai Patel</b>	...	... 69
(By P. R. Menon, LL.B.)		
<b>Ziauddin Ahmad</b>	...	... 149
(By M. A. Alavi, LL.B.)		





NURSES' CORNER'  
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CALCUTTA.

## EMINENT INDIANS

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

( B. 1869— )

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The latter half of the nineteenth century marks the advent of a new era of political renaissance in India. About a century of alien rule had succeeded in disintegrating the spirit of India. The Sepoy Mutiny is a turning point in the history of India's struggle for liberation. The idealistic reaction which derived its nourishment from great intellectual leaders like Rammohan Roy and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya was gradually acquiring a dynamic force and the country launched on the immense task of the throwing off the shackles of being ruled, a task which has yet to be fulfilled. This efflorescence of nationalism rose to a temporary climax in 1857. Soon, however, the youthful enthusiasm died down under the apparent benevolence of a benign rule. India for the time being settled down to the make-belief of peace and tranquillity. But the smouldering fire of aggrieved patriotism can never be extinguished. It sets ablaze whenever there is a favourable wind. The passionate love for the country, the burning zeal for hastening the day of liberation, the impatience for giving the death-blow to the tyrant which can be felt to-day even by the insensate observer can be traced back to those days of upheaval however temporary that phase might have been. The difference is only in degree.

Curiously enough, the decade which followed the Sepoy Mutiny is crowded with the birth of at least three men whom India will worship with love and gratitude which only a nation in agony seeking freedom can give to its most beloved sons. They are Motilal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Tagore and Gandhi will easily outshine any two of the greatest names in history. Gandhiji has influenced the history of India in revolt to such an extent that he symbolises to-day the aspirations of India. Indeed, his ideas have permeated so deep into the social, political and spiritual life of India that it does not sound absurd when it is claimed that Gandhi is India. Even those who have dissented from him have taken their first lessons from him. Silently and peacefully he has brought about a revolutionary change in the outlook of the Indian nation as a whole. In this respect his movement through non-violence has been more successful than many of the bloodiest and most spectacular revolutions in history. For over a quarter of a century he has been the symbol of the national movement. He is the spark behind all conflagration,—a fire that burns without consuming.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born at Porbandar (Kathiawar) on October 2, 1869. His father Karamchand Gandhi was a Prime Minister in Porbandar. Gandhiji describes his father as 'truthful, brave, generous but short-tempered'. The Gandhis could not claim any great cultural tradition. Mohandas's father had practically no academic education. His mother Pultibai was deeply religious and she scrupulously observed all the austerities prescribed by the Hindu religion.

He received his primary education at schools in Porbandar and Rajkot. Like many other great men he showed no keen interest in the drab monotony of school life. But he was a loyal student and did his work faithfully. His career is a

pointer to the fact that excellence can be attained even outside the portals of the school and the college. He had his training in the 'school of life in his ceaseless experiments with truth.

About this period when he was only seven years old he was betrothed for the third time. The infant Gandhi was in blissful ignorance of this premature and engineered romance in his life. His marriage with Kasturbai was solemnised in 1883 when he was only thirteen. In his autobiography he records how it seemed to him to be an occasion for merry-making and a prospect for getting colourful clothes. With this romantic break Gandhi matriculated in 1887 from the Kathiawar High School at Rajkot.

His father died at the age of 63 when he was sixteen. The first lesson in toleration was received by Gandhi at the death-bed of his father when his father discussed religion with Parsi and Muslim friends. He joined the Samaldas College at Bhavnagar but finding study difficult he left the college.

Today Gandhi denounces the profession of law. One day he himself had sailed for England against great opposition from his community to qualify himself for the Bar. Whatever may be the intrinsic quality of this profession it must be admitted that Indian nationalism has recruited some of the greatest leaders from this profession. In England he made experiments in simple living and it is said that he reduced his living to 1s. 3d. a day. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that Gandhi broke down in his first effort at addressing a gathering of vegetarians in London. He was called to the Bar on June 10, 1891. On his return to India in July 1891 the news of his mother's death was disclosed to him. He felt himself disconsolate for some time. After living in Rajkot for some time he joined the Bombay High Court; but he was

unsuccessful in his attempt at building up a good profession. Gandhi left for South Africa in 1893 to take up the work offered to him by Abdulla & Co.

The year 1893 marks a turning point in the life of Gandhi. The first chapter of his life-history was about to be closed. From 1893 his life has been a ceaseless and relentless fight against tyranny and untruth.

The ill-luck of a downtrodden people follows it wherever it may go. South Africa proved no haven for Indian workers. These working people consisting chiefly of Tamil, Telegu and North Indian indentured labourers were being oppressed and inhumanly tortured by the Boer and Dutch settlers. The lukewarm protest of the British Government was a mere eye-wash. Indians were dubbed as coolies only because they happened to be darker than the settlers. Gujarati merchants both Hindu and Muslim were being prevented from taking out licences to trade. In their mad folly these arrogant settlers committed atrocities without thinking for a moment that history is an exacting judge. But out of the evil came good and when imperialistic insolence had been thinking in terms of perpetuity Gandhi evolved a way of living which in its meekness challenged not only British Imperialism but humanity. It was a reminder that the meek could still inherit the earth.

About the origin of non-violence let us make Gandhi speak for himself. Answering to Dr. John R. Mott as to what had been the most creative experiences in his life Gandhi said—

“Such experiences are a multitude. But as you put the question to me, I recalled particularly one experience that changed the course of my life. That fell to my lot seven days after I had arrived in South Africa. I had gone there on a purely mundane and selfish mission. I was just a boy returned from England wanting to make some money. Suddenly the

client who had taken me there asked me to go to Pretoria from Durban.' It was not an easy journey. There was the railway journey as far as Charlestown and the coach to Johannesburg. On the train I had a first class ticket, but not a bed ticket. At Maritzburg when the beds were issued, the guard came and turned me out, and asked me to go into the van compartment. I would not go, and the train steamed away leaving me shivering in the cold. Now the creative experience comes there. I was afraid for my very life. I entered the dark waiting room. There was a white man in the room. I was afraid of him. What was my duty, I asked myself. Should I go back to India or should I go forward, with God as my helper, and face whatever was in store for me? I decided to stay and suffer. My active non-violence began from that date."

Unexpectedly, therefore, Gandhi found himself plunged into political activities in South Africa. He spent two and half years in Natal and built up a fairly good practice. He decided to settle in Natal. In 1896 Gandhi came to India for six months but on an urgent call from Natal he left India immediately accompanied by his wife and children. He was received on landing with a volley of stones by the settlers. But true to his creed of 'Ahimsa' he had infinite trust in their sense of fairness. When Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary asked the Natal Government to bring to book the assailants of Gandhi he told the Government that when truth would become known to the assailants they would be sorry for their conduct. Indeed they made amends by condemning this mob violence. Gandhi's cause was thus vindicated.

From this time Gandhi began to imbibe austere habits in life. He simplified his way of living to make it really a collection of a countless experiments with truth. Gandhi organised ambulance corps during the Boer War and thus

helped the Government. He left South Africa for India towards the end of 1901.

In 1901 and 1902 Gandhi made contacts with great Indian leaders like Gokhale, Phirozeshah Mehta, Dinsha Wachha, Chimanlal Sitalvad, Lokamanya Tilak, Motilal Ghosh and Surendranath Banerjee. He also toured India extensively. On the receipt of a cablegram from South Africa he again left India in 1902 reaching Pretoria on January 1, 1903. He founded the Transvaal British India Association and took upon himself the task of editing the 'Indian Opinion'. About this time he read Ruskin's 'Unto the Last' which left a deep impression on him. To carry those doctrines into practice he established the Phoenix Settlement. From 1907 to 1914 Gandhi fought for vindicating the cause of Indians settled in South Africa, and the protracted struggle ended in 1914 with the repeal of the 'Black Act.'

The first chapter of his political life closed with a triumphant victory. Armed with a new weapon of warfare and with a new way of living Gandhi landed in Bombay on January 9, 1915 at the age of 46. Since then he has dedicated his life to the cause of India's uplift and liberation. In ancient India sannyasins practised complete self-denial in order to liberate the soul from the bondage of flesh but here is the story of a saint who has forsaken everything for the sake of redeeming the soul of India and that of humanity from tyranny and untruth.

On May 25, 1915 Gandhi founded the Satyagraha Ashram. The members had to take the vows of truth, 'ahimsa', celibacy, control of the palate, non-thieving, non-possession, Swadeshi, fearlessness, removal of untouchability, education through vernaculars and Khaddar."

Ever since his return from South Africa he was taking active interest in the affairs of the Congress, but he had not yet become

the central figure. In 1918 he conducted the Ahmedabad Labour Strike but as the strike showed signs of weakness he resorted to hunger-strike. A settlement was arrived at after Gandhi had fasted for three days. The same year he led the Kheua Satyagraha to a successful end.

Meanwhile, the stage was being set for a nation-wide movement,—the Non-co-operation Movement. The massacre of the people at Jallianwala Bagh embittered the minds of the people against the rulers and there was a country-wide agitation as a protest against these inhuman atrocities. The All-India Khilafat Conference was held on November 24, 1919. For the first time Gandhi suggested non-co-operation. At the special Congress session in Calcutta in September, 1920 a resolution demanding 'Swaraj' was passed and the resolution approving non-co-operation was also accepted after a prolonged discussion. On August 1, 1921 a huge bonfire of foreign clothes was made in Bombay. From that time 'charka' and 'khadi' have been recommended by Gandhi as the most effective weapons for attaining Swaraj.

On the occasion of the arrival of the Prince of Wales in India on November 17, 1921 there was bloodshed. Gandhi protested against these excesses by submitting himself to a fast lasting for five days. He was arrested on March 10, 1922 on a charge of sedition. He took full responsibility for what had happened in Madras, Bombay and Chauri Chaura. In course of a statement during the memorable trial at Ahmedabad he confessed that he knew he had been playing with fire and he reiterated his desire to do it again. He said, "Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for Non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only

course open to you, the judge, is either to resign your post or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country, and that my activity is therefore injurious to the common weal."

In jail Gandhi began his autobiography which has been aptly called 'The Story of My Experiments with Truth'. He was released on February 5, 1924. Meanwhile, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and Motilal Nehru were pleading for council-entry. The Swarajists for the time being dominated the Indian political scene. At the A.I.C.C. meeting held on November 23-24 Gandhi made up his differences with the two great leaders. Gandhi presided over the Belgaum Session of the Congress in 1924. The All-India Spinners' Association was established with Gandhi as the Chairman to carry out the constructive programme unhampered by political activities.

On Feb. 3, 1923 a Commission headed by Sir John Simon landed in Bombay. All political parties boycotted the Commission and there was country-wide agitation. In spite of this opposition the Commission proceeded with the enquiry. Meanwhile, the Bardoli Satyagraha was started with the approval of Gandhi. Complete Independence was declared to be the goal of India at the Lahore Session of the Congress on December 31, 1929 under the presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The Independence Pledge was solemnly taken on the 26th of January, 1930. Since then millions have repeated it every year and to-day we find a grim determination to throw off the foreign yoke. At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee at Sabarmati (February 14-16) Civil Disobedience was approved. On April 6, 1930 Gandhi started his Salt Satyagraha. At a prayer meeting on that evening he said, "The British rule in India has brought about moral, material, cultural and spiritual



ruination of this country. I regard this rule as a curse. I am out to destroy this system of Government. We are not out to kill anybody but it is our *dharma* that the curse of this Government is blotted out."

Congressmen were arrested throughout India. Gandhi himself was arrested. The Government made an all-out effort to crush the movement. There were about 10,000 convictions. The first Round Table Conference was held without the Congress participating in it. On January 25, 1931 Lord Irwin released Gandhi and other members of the Working Committee. Negotiations went on between Gandhi and the Viceroy. On March 4, 1931 the Gandhi-Irwin pact was signed. The Civil Disobedience Movement was called off for the time being. Gandhi left Simla on August 27, 1931 to attend the Round Table Conference in London. On return from England in December Gandhi found that the political situation had worsened. Within ten months (in 1930-31) 90,000 people were imprisoned. Gandhi was again authorized by the Working Committee to renew Satyagraha.

On August 17, 1932 MacDonald's Communal Award was announced. Gandhi decided to fast unto death if the Award was not repealed. On September 24, the Yervada Pact was signed. On the receipt of a satisfactory communique from the Government on the 26th September, Gandhi broke the fast to the relief of his countrymen. Next year he again resorted to a self-purificatory fast for 21 days. On April 7, 1934 Gandhi suspended the Civil Disobedience Movement because he felt that the masses had not yet received the full message of Satyagraha. As he wanted absolute freedom of action he resigned from the Congress and concentrated his attention on the constructive programme.

## EMINENT INDIANS

Gandhi resorted to a fast on March 3, 1939 as a protest against the breach of pact by the Thakoreshaheb of Rajkot. There was trouble inside the Congress regarding the re-election of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose to the Presidentship of the Congress. Unfortunately, Gandhi was not untouched by this controversy.

On the declaration of the War Gandhi found himself "alone in thinking that whatever support was to be given to the British should be given unconditionally." The Working Committee at its meeting (June 17-20, 1940) resolved, "Problems which were distant are now near at hand and may soon 'demand solution'... the problem of the achievement of national freedom has now to be considered along with the allied one of its maintenance and the defence of the country against possible external aggression and internal disorder. The Wardha decision left the Working Committee of the Congress free to take political decisions without having to think of their implications in terms of violence and non-violence. It put forward a proposal for the acknowledgement of India's independence by Britain and immediate formation at the centre of a Provisional National Government. The Working Committee absolved Gandhiji from responsibility for the programme and activity which the Congress had to pursue in regard to external aggression and internal disorder."

For the first time there was a vital difference between Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee. Soon, however, the Committee reiterated its faith in the leadership of Gandhi and requested him to guide the affairs of the Congress. He devised a 'new weapon, Individual Satyagraha, to register the moral protest of India against Imperialistic oppression. Nearly 25,000 Satyagrahis had been arrested in course of the movement. The Congress Working Committee met at Bardoli (Dec. 23-30,

1941) to consider the situation arising out of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour. Here was a fundamental difference between Gandhi and the Working Committee on the issue of non-violence and Gandhi wanted to be relieved of his responsibility. But at the A.I.C.C. meeting in January, 1942 he again agreed to give his guidance to the Congress.

On March 22, 1946 Sir Strafford Cripps arrived at Karachi with the proposals of the British Cabinet. Gandhi characterised it as "a post-dated cheque." The negotiations failed. On July 14, 1942 the Working Committee passed the famous Quit India Resolution, which was ratified by the A.I.C.C. at Bombay on August 8, 1942. Gandhi, the members of the Working Committee and other Congress leaders were arrested on August 9 and the Congress was declared illegal. There was an upsurge of nationalism and in the absence of their leaders people did whatever they thought would hasten the day of liberation. On February 10, 1943 Gandhi began his 21-day fast. He was 74th and at times it seemed the strain was too much for him. He successfully went through the ordeal. Gandhi broke the fast on March 3, 1943. On February 22, 1944 Kasturbai died in the Aga Khan Palace. Death took away two of his most beloved companions, Mahadev Desai and Kasturbai Gandhi. He was released unconditionally on May 6, 1944 on grounds of health.

We have given in very brief outlines the story of a life extending over 75 years,—a life dedicated to the cause of humanity.\* Gandhi is a challenge to the world. He is the

\* For a very helpful account of Gandhiji's life in outlines the reader is referred to Sri D. G. Tendulkar's 'Gandhi Chronicle 1869-1944' in **GANDHIJI—HIS LIFE AND WORK**—Published on his 75th birthday, October 2, 1944.

living embodiment of non-violence and truth. In a world where there is a blind race for power Gandhi has taught humility of spirit. He has fought against the mightiest empire not with the strength of the body but with the invisible strength which emanates from a deep faith in Satya and Ahimsa. To Gandhi Ahimsa is a positive virtue ; it is not merely non-killing. He says, "But to me it has a world of meaning and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher. It really means that you may not offend anybody ; you may not harbour any uncharitable thought even in connection with one whom you may consider yourself to be your enemy." To him it has meant conscious suffering—the 'putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant.' Non-violence is not therefore a weapon of the weak, it is the self-restraint of the strongest of the strong with a view to bring about a change in the mind of the opponent. To many people Gandhi seems to be an unpractical visionary. He is an idealist no doubt ; no great thing has been done without idealism. Instinctively he felt that the genius of India was peculiarly suited for such an experiment. The experiment has been on a great scale. In spite of its imperfection it has shown to the world that it can command irresistible strength.

Today India is burning with the desire to give the final blow to the enemy. The entire nation is pulsating with a new life. Indeed there is evident impatience in the country. The ruling power must be got rid of now. Confidence in the unity and strength of India has resulted in a doubt in the efficacy of non-violence as a method of warfare.

Through years of struggle India has gathered strength. Gandhi landed in India in 1915. Through thirty years of ceaseless struggle he has brought about a change in the outlook of a nation which even the bloodiest of revolutions could not possibly do. He is a constructive genius. He has

not come here to destroy, but to rebuild. He is one of the greatest humanists the world has ever seen. Deliberately he refrains from talking in terms of socialism or communism but the picture of India envisaged by him is not far removed from those doctrines. He says,—

“I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony.....’There can be no room in such India for the curse of untouchability, for the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs.....Women will enjoy the same rights as men..... that is the India of my dreams.”

Gandhi has devoted his energies to the making a reality of his dream. He has tried to remove untouchability, divisions and discords among the opposing sections of the people. He has endeavoured to teach self-reliance through his constructive programme of the Charka, Khadi and village industries. He has fought for the emancipation of women from social bondage. Thus by trying to remove the yoke of slavery and the yoke of antiquated customs he has tried to restore confidence in the mind of the ordinary people.

To young India, as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru beautifully puts it, “Gandhi is a legend, a far-away mysterious figure.” Yes, at times he seems to be too far away from the aspiring and restless India of today. The movement for liberation has gathered a tremendous force and new notes are being struck by a newer generation. But it would be sheer ingratitude to forget in the hour of glory the man who has been the architect of this nation.

Gandhi's immediate task—the liberation of India from bondage, is sure to succeed. But greater than that his experiment with a new way of life—a life based on non-violence and truth, is still going on. In this respect he is a visionary. He may fail, but that failure will not take away anything from his greatness. To put it in the words of Rabindranath he may fail "as the Buddha failed, and as Christ failed to wean men from their iniquities, but he will always be remembered as one who made his life a lesson for all ages to come."

March, 1946.

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## EMINENT INDIANS

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Sarat Chandra Bose

## SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

( B. 1889— )

“We refuse to beg with bated breath and whispering humbleness in our own land. Self-government is our right, a right born for us at our birth—the right to feel the Indian Sun, to smell the Indian flowers, to think our own thought, to sing our own song and to love our own kind. And this is a right which we are not prepared to barter away. If to demand it is to be a rebel in act and deed, then I on behalf of myself and my party am proud to be a rebel and shall cling to my rebellion with all my heart and soul.”

Speech delivered by Sarat Chandra Bose  
in the Bengal Legislative Assembly  
on the 13th December, 1939.

### I

Sarat Ch. Bose is one of India's important men. He is the leader of the Congress party in the Central Legislature, the undisputed leader of Bengal and the political successor to Subhas Chandra Bose.

He is also an interesting personality. A successful Barrister he has chosen for himself a life of suffering and peril. Though nearly sixty he is an extremist in his political views. He has tried to avoid the limelight but circumstances have forced him into prominence. Frank, upright and incorruptible he has found himself engaged again and again in fierce controversies. Deeply religious—a devotee of Kali—he is yet absolutely free from communalism. He is a finished parliamentarian but he knows the limits of parliamentarianism. He is not a mass leader by temperament but he can rise to the occasion and shoulder

responsibilities. His approach to politics is a blend of idealism and practicality. He takes his stand above the battle of doctrines and asks his countrymen to strive relentlessly for freedom.

## II

Old men who have known the Boses say that Sarat Chandra has inherited many traits from his father Janakinath. Janakinath was certainly a remarkable man in many ways. Early in his life he gave up his headmaster's job in a petty school, left his ancestral home at Kodalia, an obscure village near Calcutta, went down to Cuttack where his step-brother was a professor and set up practice there as a pleader. He eventually became a leader of the local Bar and was appointed the Government Pleader. For years he was the Chairman of the Cuttack Municipality and of the District Board. He was a sound lawyer and his income was considerable. He was amiable, generous and humane but a man of much independence and unshakable integrity of character. He adopted European ways and habits and was popularly known as "Janaki Saheb". His personal appearance was impressive—tall, heavy of build and handsome in a manly way. He was devoted to his family and his children adored him. He never used the rod.

Sarat Chandra's mother Prabhavati came of the well-known Dutta family of Hatkhola in Calcutta. She was an ideal wife and mother and was capable of great self-sacrifice. She was a woman of decision and some firmness of mind. It was she who insisted on Sarat Chandra's going to England and qualifying for the Bar.

Prabhavati bore fourteen children to Janakinath. Sarat, their second son and fourth child was born in 1889. Their sixth son Subhas was born in 1897.

## III

Somehow neither at school nor at college did Sarat Chandra shine as a student. He got a second class in B. A. while his brilliant friend Rajendra Prasad topped the list. But there was always something striking about him. His teachers never had any doubt that Sarat would be "somebody" some day. As a school boy at the Ravenshaw Collegiate School and later as a student of the Ravenshaw College he impressed everybody by his unusual gravity, his perfect manners and his remarkable proficiency in English. Even at that early age he showed himself to be a fluent and skilful debater. When he joined the Presidency College for his B. A. he continued to neglect his books but maintained his reputation as an invincible debater. In due course he took his Master's degree in English and the Law degree but, as usual, failed to distinguish himself.

## IV

While still a student—in 1909—Sarat Chandra had got married to Bivabati, daughter of late Akshay Kumar De of Central Calcutta. His first child was born the next year.

For a profession Sarat Chandra chose the law and decided to practise at Cuttack following in his father's footsteps. Janakinath who detested the idea of service concurred in his plans. Sarat Chandra had in the mean time been enrolled as an Advocate of the Calcutta High Court. But about 1911 he left Calcutta and started practice at Cuttack. Soon after however on the advice of friends and respecting his mother's desire he sailed for England to qualify for the Bar. In 1914 he was called to the Bar from Lincoln's Inn.

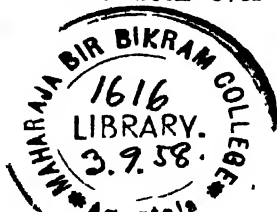
On his return to India he joined the Calcutta High Court and was lucky to be able to attach himself to the great Nripendra Nath Sircar. He applied himself seriously to professional work

and with energy and tenacity faced the dreary struggle which is the lot of every aspirant after legal laurels. However before many years were out his outstanding ability as an advocate was recognised and he enjoyed a decent junior practice. His rise at the Bar was rapid. Within less than ten years of his joining the Bar he was earning a substantial income.

Bose is a brilliant cross-examiner and a formidable opponent. His dignified bearing, his bold and confident manner—so disconcerting to the other side—and his lucid and sound exposition of the law make him a most effective advocate. When addressing the Bench he is polished and courteous but he maintains his dignity and never goes on his knees. His tussle with Mr. Justice Page with its unfortunate sequel is still remembered. That learned judge once found Bose particularly obstinate and in a fit of temper asked him to clear out. This caused a tremendous flutter among the members of the Bar. In the afternoon when the Court was about to rise the Advocate General Mr. S. R. Das on behalf of the Bar strongly protested before Mr. Justice Page against this act of highhandedness, and told the learned judge in his face that members of the Bar did not like to be treated like “chaprassis.” The public became greatly agitated over this incident but, happily, Bose’s friends succeeded in bringing about a compromise. One other aspect of Sarat Chandra as a lawyer needs to be mentioned—his professional conduct has always been exemplary and above reproach.

## V

C. R. Das’s inspiring example and the force and brilliance of his personality worked a profound change in his life. He joined the Deshbandhu’s distinguished circle and devoted himself to Congress work. He put his talents as well as his purse at the disposal of the nation. Indeed he has been ever since the



permanent defence counsel of all persons brought up on political charges in Bengal. And political workers when sentenced go to gaol without anxiety—for Sarat Bose would look after their families.

For a long time Sarat Chandra kept out of the limelight. At the time of the non-co-operation movement he carried on a sensational duel with his own leader at the Bar Sir N. N. Sircar in the columns of the journal "Servant" and strongly criticised him for opposing the movement. After formation of the Swarajya Party in 1923 Das founded the "Forward", the organ of the party, with Subhas Chandra Bose as an editor. The management of the paper was entrusted to Sarat Chandra who made a thoroughly successful job of it. When in 1928 the "Forward" had to be closed down, Sarat Chandra promptly brought out the "Liberty" along with two other journals in Bengali. Sarat Chandra of course had to spend substantial amounts out of his own pocket in these ventures. After the inauguration of Diarchy he entered the legislature as a member of the Swarajya Party and took part in that party's vigorous assaults on the Constitution. But his decisive entry into public life dates from 1924 when he was elected an Alderman of the Calcutta Corporation. Das was the Mayor that year and Subhas Chandra Bose the Chief Executive Officer. The Deshbandhu's death in 1925 came as a stunning blow to Sarat Chandra. His political career since then has been linked up with that of his brother Subhas.

If C. R. Das first drew him into politics young Subhas led him into the path of extremism. He had his first taste of imprisonment in 1933. He was arrested and detained without trial under the infamous Regulation III of 1818—one of the "lawless laws" against which he himself had carried on a strong agitation. While yet in detention he was elected unopposed

to the Central Assembly from the Calcutta constituency on Congress Nationalist ticket. He asked the authorities for permission to attend the sittings of the Assembly. It was refused. On January 22, 1935 in the Central Assembly S. J. Bhulabhai Desai, leader of the Congress party, in a memorable speech supported the censure motion brought by S. J. N. C. Bardoloi against Government for their refusal to permit Sarat Chandra to attend and got it passed. His release however did not follow immediately but came some time after.

But in the mean time he had had a terrible bereavement. His father passed away on the 2nd December, 1934. Subhas returned from exile but he was too late. He performed the 'sradh' ceremony and went back to Europe.

Subhas returned to India again in April, 1936 but was clapped in prison under Regulation III. He got out of jail in March, 1937 and was elected Congress President. At his request Sarat Chandra accepted membership of the Working Committee of the Congress. In his presidential address at the Haripura session Subhas struck a note of warning against making any compromise on the issue of the Federation. At this time the Congress was running ministries in eight provinces of India. The Viceroy Lord Linlithgow was anxious to introduce the Federal part of the Constitution of 1935 and was sending out feelers to parties and personalities. Subhas and Sarat launched a powerful agitation against the Viceroy's attempt to foist the Federation on the Indian people. Their impatience perturbed the Mahatma and filled the right-wing Congressmen with nervousness. For the next year's Presidentship Gandhiji nominated Dr. Sitaramayya. Subhas took up the challenge on behalf of the leftists and sought election for a second term. Anti-Federation feeling was strong in the country and Subhas won with a thumping majority.



The famous Jalpaiguri Resolution summed up the programme of the new President. The Conference which passed this resolution was presided over by Sarat Chandra Bose. At the Tripuri session of the Congress Subhas and Sarat explained their programme of giving an ultimatum and pleaded for its acceptance. But Tripuri proved to be the grave of the leftists. No less a man than Pandit Jawaharlal gave battle to Sarat Chandra and vehemently criticised the ultimatum proposal. Moreover the spirit of dissension was rampant. The Pant Resolution requiring the President to choose his cabinet in consultation with Gandhiji was passed in the open session of the Congress. This was of course nothing short of a no-confidence vote against Subhas. Subhas bowed to the will of the majority and sought Gandhiji's advice and direction. Gandhiji however felt that the difference between Subhas and himself was fundamental and refused to help. So, faced with non-co-operation of the veterans, Subhas resigned Presidentship on the 30th April, 1939.

Subhas now formed the "Forward Bloc" as the leftist anti-thesis to the right-wing thesis. His first proselyte was his "mejda" Sarat Chandra. To Subhas and his infant party Sarat Chandra proved to be a tower of strength. Subhas's ordeal was not yet over. He was expelled by the Congress for three years for carrying on agitation against the Working Committee of the Congress of which Babu Rajendra Prasad was now the President.

The split had wide repercussions. The year 1940 saw at Ramgarh two rival Congresses in session. The situation in Bengal became the most acute. The B. P. C. C. was suspended but had a more vigorous life than the official ad hoc committee. The Calcutta Corporation was captured by the "Forward Bloc" party. In the Legislative Assembly the Congress party split

into two : the official Congress party led by Kiron Sankar Roy and the "Forward Bloc" party led by Sarat Chandra Bose.

But Subhas who had sat at the feet of the Deshbandhu and had understood the true import of the Tarakeswar Satyagraha, launched a movement which united, at least for a time, the whole of Bengal. He called upon the Government to remove the Black Hole monument. This became the united demand of all Bengalees—Hindu and Muslim. Young Hindus and Muslims offered Satyagraha and courted police repression and imprisonment. Government had to yield and the monument was removed from the public street. But the authorities were frightened at Subhas's growing influence and they put him under internment in his Elgin Road residence. On the 26th January, 1941 he disappeared from his residence under mysterious circumstances.

Bengal was unfortunate in having a communal ministry since the inception of Provincial Autonomy. The poison infected the whole administration and ugly scenes were daily enacted in the Legislative Assembly. The Congress looked helplessly on, unable to check the rot. The Mahasabha got a foothold. Communal bitterness went on increasing till 1941 when terrible riots broke out in many places, particularly in the Dacca region. Sarat Chandra Bose went down to Dacca and appeared before the Dacca Riots Enquiry Committee on behalf of the Congress. Determined to rid Bengal of senseless communal strife Sarat Chandra directed all his energies to the formation of a popular ministry. With rare statesmanship and drive he rallied all progressive and nationalist forces. Fazlul Huq as leader of Bengali Muslims and the Krishak Proja Party, revolted against the League High Command. The Progressive Coalition Party was formed. On December 1, 1941 the first Huq ministry resigned and Bengal heaved a sigh of relief.

## SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

On the 11th December at about 12 noon Fazlul Huq amidst universal congratulation announced the formation of a popular ministry.

Sarat Chandra had been proposed as a member of the new cabinet. But a great disappointment was in store for the Progressives and the people of Bengal. In the afternoon of the 11th Sarat Chandra was arrested. At 3-20 P. M. Fazlul Huq was summoned on the telephone to the Government House. He was received by the Governor and was informed that orders had been received for the arrest of Bose for being in communication with the Japanese. At 5-30 P.M. the Deputy Commissioner of the Special Branch with a retinue of Police Officers arrived at 1 Woodburn Park. As Bose came down to meet them an order under the Defence of India Rules for his arrest was served on him. For the time being he was to be confined in his residence. He was forbidden to have visitors and to use the telephone. A large number of members of the Assembly and the Council were waiting at that time for a conference with Bose in connection with the new Ministry. Bose smilingly took leave of them and of Fazlul Huq and Syamaprasad who had arrived by this time. Bose was later on sent off to distant Trichinopoly. There were angry and insistent demands inside and outside the legislature for his release. But Government was adamant. He was kept in solitary detention for nearly four years. Broken in health, he was released on the 14th September, 1945 after the collapse of Japan.

Sarat Chandra's suffering and sacrifice had made a profound impression on the people. He received a great ovation when he reached Bombay shortly after his release and in his home province was welcomed back amidst tumultuous scenes of joy.

It seemed that a new era had opened and prostrate Bengal was coming back to life

With his usual statesmanship the first thing Sarat Chandra did after his release was to make it up with the Congress "High Command." At the A. I. C. C. meeting at Bombay in September, 1945 the great Sardar and Sarat Chandra embraced each other on the dais in view of all the assembled members. It was "forgive and forget" on both sides. Harmony was restored among Congressmen in Bengal. The province was once again brought into the main current of the national movement. The change was reflected in the sweeping victory of the Congress in the election to the Central Assembly held towards the close of 1945. Sarat Chandra neutralised the Mahasabha by his unequivocal condemnation of the Muslim League demand for Pakistan. He was elected to the Central Assembly from the Calcutta constituency beating the Mahasabha candidate by an overwhelming majority of votes. As was to be expected he was elected to the leadership of the Congress party in the Central legislature—a position of honour and responsibility and one adorned successively by Pandit Motilal Nehru and Bhulabhai J. Desai.

Sarat Chandra's bold and forthright utterances after his release on national and international questions have startled complacent politicians and "fashionable internationalists" and have stimulated the political conscience of India. He has amplified Gandhiji's "Quit India" into "Quit Asia." He was the first prominent Indian to voice whole-hearted support to Red China as against the Chiang-Kai Shek regime. He has pleaded for an "Asiatic Federation"—first visualised by the Deshbandhu—as distinguished from "South-East Asia Federation." He has passionately espoused the cause of the I. N. A. and has asked young men and women of India

to follow the ideals of the I. N. A. and to undergo military training.

Prolonged incarceration has shattered his health, but his indomitable spirit has suffered no change. He is still capable of thinking in terms of conflict. He is still Sarat Chandra Bose the ardent patriot and fearless critic of the bureaucracy.

## APPENDIX

The author has consulted the following for the political events referred to in the biography :—

1. History of the Congress—P. Sitaramayya.
2. Muktir Sandhane Bharat—J. C. Bagal.
3. 'Bharate Jatiya Andolan'—P. K. Mukherjee.

A brief sketch of S. J. Bose published in the Amrita Bazar Patrika Congress Supplement dated the 9th March, 1939 has also been utilised.

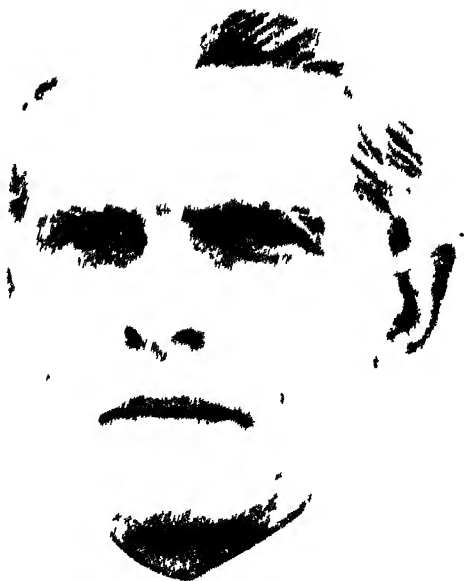
Invaluable information about S. J. Bose's early life and his parents has been kindly supplied by Prof. Ashokenath Sastri and Rai Bahadur G. D. Ganguly.

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## MOHAMMED ALI JINNAH

( B. 1876— )

Even a desultory reader of the history of India of the last half a century cannot fail to be at once impressed and puzzled by the mysterious personality of Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Besides being a distinguished lawyer of the topmost rank and a member of the Central Legislative Assembly, he has also been the president of the All India Muslim League for the last several years. Any lawyer possessing such legal acumen and argumentative power as he has, must necessarily become famous within a very short time. But in addition to these factors there was another factor which tended to make him conspicuous. That factor is his complex and paradoxical nature and its influence in his political career. He is a nationalist in the sense that he wants India to become independent as much as anybody else ; yet he wants to divide India into two and this claim for partition is today the greatest obstacle in the path of India's freedom. He can hardly be called religious ; yet he fights with fanatical zeal to protect Islamic religion and culture. Even in his physical appearance this paradox is in evidence ; his thin and emaciated figure is a deceptive sheath which hides his spirit of exceptional vitality and endurance. He began his political career as a staunch Congressman and as an "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity." But in the middle he turned a complete somersault and became the enemy of the Congress and an "Apostle of Communalism." Gokhale said of him : "He has true stuff in him and that freedom from all sectarian prejudice which will make him the best ambassador of the Hindu-Muslim Unity." If Gokhale were to come to this world now, he would



Mr M A Jinnah





be shocked to find the man, whom he looked upon as the fittest man to bring about a union of Hindus and Muslims, vociferously demanding a partition of India into two parts, Hindu India and Muslim India.

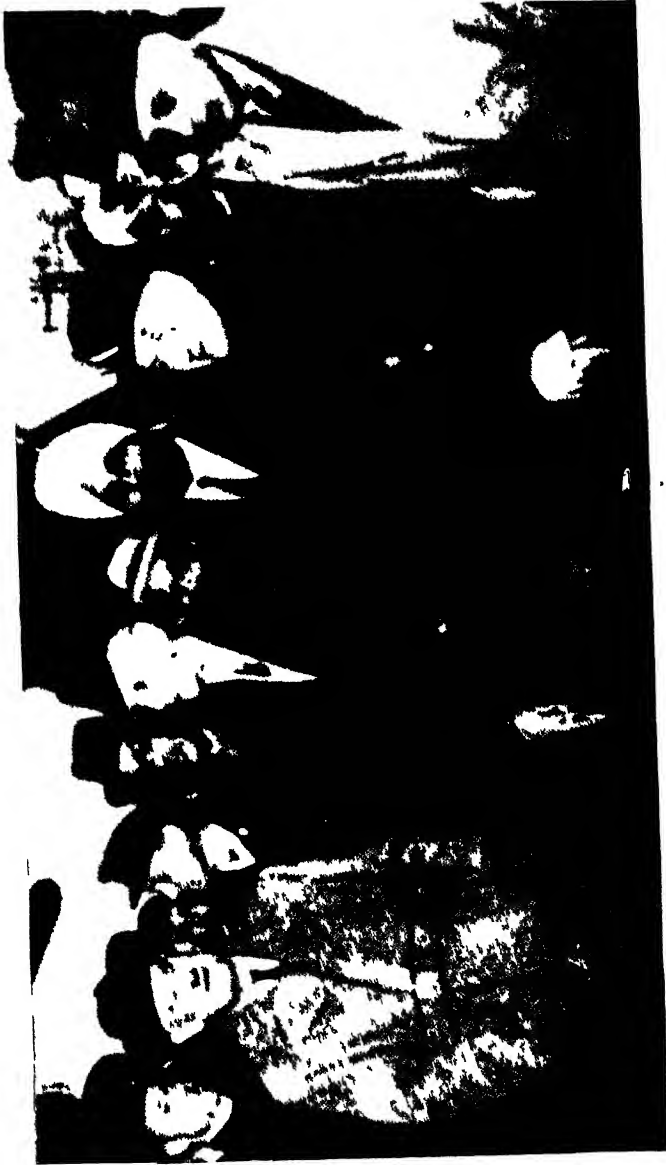
Does he really believe that in a free India the Muslims will be oppressed by the Hindus? If that is the case, should he not try to establish Pakistan in the provinces where the Muslims form a minority instead of in the provinces where they are a majority and where they are thus least likely to be oppressed? Is it true that the Hindus and Muslims are so radically opposed to each other that they will never get on at all together as Jinnah would make us believe? Is his claim for Pakistan actuated by pure motives of safe-guarding Muslim interests? Or, is it only an elaborate pose for getting power and leadership? No attempt is made here to answer these questions because from the data that we have at present, no conclusive answer can be given to these questions. Those who have attempted to answer these questions have not been free from bias; they have ultimately ended by giving vent to their own prejudices.

Mohammed Ali Jinnah was born on Christmas day in 1876 in the City of Karachi. He was the son of a rich Khoja Mohammedan merchant. Being the eldest son of a rich father, he was brought up in affluence and was fondled very much. But though pampered he was not spoilt. He evinced a singular taste for study which was very uncommon among other boys in his circumstances. Very early in his life he was sent to the local Madrassah from where he got his elementary education. Next he went to the Mission School from where he matriculated in due course. In 1892 he was sent to England to study for the Bar. He returned to India as a Barrister in 1896.

From boyhood he developed a passion for his motherland. The great patriot, Gokhale, was his model. "It is my ambition" he said, "to become the Muslim Gokhale of India." Those who know him only as the president of the Muslim League and the advocate of Pakistan will be surprised to hear that there was a time when he deliberately stood aloof from the Muslim League and declined to be its member on the ground that it was a purely sectarian body whose aims were the welfare and progress of the Muslim community only and not of India as a whole. In those days he was a staunch adherent of the Congress and an ardent nationalist. In the course of a discussion on the Indian Finance Bill in the Central Assembly in 1925, he once said : "I am a nationalist first, a nationalist second and a nationalist last. I once more appeal to this House, whether you are a Hindu or a Muslim, for God's sake do not import the discussion of communal matters into this House which, we desire, should become a national Parliament." He learned his first lessons in politics from the Congress leaders of those days, Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Gokhale and C. R. Das. He himself has confessed this, thus : "I might say that I learned my first lessons in politics at the feet of Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee. He commanded the utmost respect of a large body of people in this country and of my humble self."

When he returned from England he found his family in poverty. He could not afford to lead an easy and comfortable life. For the first few years he had to struggle very hard. But a man of his intelligence cannot long remain in obscurity. He soon came up to the front ranks. In 1906 he was enrolled as an Advocate of the Bombay High Court. Today he is one of the foremost lawyers of Bombay. He commands a large and lucrative practice and is well known as an authority on questions of law.





Pandit Nehru Mr Jinnah and other Indian Leaders in London

If Jinna's fame as a lawyer is great, his fame as a parliamentarian is equally great. As a member, first of the Central Legislative Council and later of the Assembly, he has rendered valuable service to the nation and to the Mohammedan community. In 1910 he was elected by the Mussalmans of Bombay as their representative in the Imperial Council. Though he represented only a community he supported all progressive measures involving national issues. His speeches delivered on the elementary Education Bill, Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill and Civil Marriage Bill are famous ~~as~~ showing his dignified eloquence, convincing reasoning and national spirit. In 1925 he supported a resolution for maintaining a well-equipped military college in India. He also pressed for India-nising the army.

As a member of the Legislature he has also jealously guarded and fought for the special interests of the Mohammedans. It was to protect the Mohammedan law relating to Wakfs that he sponsored the Wakf Validating Bill. The Privy Council, in a certain case, had declared that a Wakf (religious endowment) created in favour of one's own family was invalid as such a Wakf did not in any way benefit the public. Mohammedan Law, however, permits the creation of such Wakfs. Fearing that the Privy Council's decision might act as a powerful precedent and would, in effect, substantially infringe an orthodox Mohammedan Law, Jinnah introduced the Wakf Validating Bill in the Council and successfully piloted it through the legislature. For the first time a Bill introduced by a private member became law.

Like a true lawyer he has the greatest respect for law and so he has no sympathy for the anarchists and revolutionaries who try to alter the Government by violating the laws. When speaking on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill he said: "I wish

to express that every attempt on the part of my countrymen to undermine the authority of the Government and to disturb law and order deserves, in my opinion, the strongest condemnation and the highest punishment. These men who have a desire to disturb law and order are, in my opinion, the highest enemies of the country. Let these men who still have these misguided ideas, let these men who still have these hallucinations, realise that by anarchism, by dastardly crimes, they cannot bring about good government. Let them realise before it is too late that these are not the methods." But his respect for law and constituted authority has not prevented him from fiercely opposing the Government whenever they started any objectionable policy detrimental to the interests of the country at large. "I believe," he said, "in criticising the Government freely and frankly ; but at the same time that it is the duty of every educated man to support and help the Government when the Government is right."

The year 1913 was an eventful year in Jinnah's life. He had become a prominent Congressman by that time. Till now he had branded the Muslim League as a narrow sectarian organisation and, on that account, declined to become a member of that organisation. In the year 1913, when persuaded by Mohammed Ali and Syed Wazir Hussain, he however condescended to attend the annual conference of the Muslim League which was held in March in Lucknow. In that Conference the League adopted a new constitution by which they brought their aims and ideals more into line with those of the Congress. Jinnah appreciated this change of policy and strongly supported the new constitution. Now that the Muslim League was no longer a communal organisation, Jinnah had no more any objection to become a member. So he enrolled himself as a member, but on the clear understanding that his membership

in the League would not in the least affect his loyalty to the greater national cause.

In the middle of April 1913 Jinnah left for England in the company of Gokhale for a holiday. But his energetic mind would not allow him to sit quiet. He soon found enough work for him to do there. In order to bring about closer association among the Indians living there he founded the London Indian Association. He also fought for the removal of the restrictions on the Indian students in London. He also took the opportunity to study the constitution and working of the India Council.

This study revealed to him several flaws in the constitution and impressed upon him the imperative necessity for reforming it. So in the next session of the Congress held at Karachi he moved a resolution to alter the constitution of the India Council and reconstruct it on sound and progressive lines. Recommending the resolution he said that the existing constitution made the Secretary of State for India a greater Moghul than any Moghul who ruled in India. There was no means of representing the views of non-official Indians in the Council. He also stressed that the Council was to be only an advisory body and should not interfere with the administration of the country.

In 1916 he was first chosen as the president of the Muslim League. He upheld the system of communal electorates. Supporting that system, he said : "As far as I understand the demand for separate electorates is not a matter of policy but a matter of necessity to the Mohammedans who require to be roused from the coma and torpor into which they have fallen. A minority must have above everything else a sense of security before its broader political sense can be evoked for co-operation and united endeavour in the national tasks. To the Mussalmans of India that security can come only through adequate

and efficient safeguards as regards their political existence as a community."

Jinnah's first split with the Congress came in 1921 when the Congress started the Civil Disobedience movement. A staunch believer in constitutional methods, he could not subscribe to the revolutionary policy of Satyagraha. But he was still a nationalist. So he organised a Nationalist Party. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly about the policy of this party he remarked: "I want to make it clear that the Nationalist Party here in this House do not stand for any wrecking programme. There is no idea in the mind of the Nationalist Party to resort to civil disobedience. There is no idea to carry on a campaign of non-payment of taxes. We stand to pursue a policy and programme of a constitutional character."

When the proposal of 'Reforms' came from the British Government after the War, Jinnah suggested many salutary reforms. He was made a member of the Reforms Enquiry Committee. He strongly condemned dyarchy and made out a strong case for dropping it altogether from the Indian Constitution. He was one of the 19 members of the Legislative Council who submitted the famous memorandum on the Reforms and a new Constitution.

Since he left the Congress and joined the Muslim League he has become more and more communal in his outlook. It is difficult to say what exactly were the reasons that brought about this phenomenal change in him. A new idea suddenly came from somewhere and entered his mind and this idea has taken such a deep root in his mind that it has shaped all his subsequent actions. It has also made his mind strangely impervious to other ideas. What is this idea that wrought such a great change in such a great man? It is the idea that the Musalmans in India are not a minority but a nation, distinct



from the Hindus ; that these Musalmans are separated from the Hindus by reason of their different religion, language, culture and customs by such an unbridgeable gulf that it will be detrimental to their interests and progress to remain in a state and under a Government where the Hindus are sure to have a majority ; that the Hindus will always try to oppress the Muslims and destroy their culture and civilisation ; that the Muslims, being a separate nation, have the inherent right to decide what form of Government they should have and that a democratic system of Government will be unsuitable for India, because in such a Government the Hindus, as the majority, will always wield power. Stressing on the fundamental antagonism of Hindus and Mohammedans, Jinnah said : "It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the term, but are in fact different and distinct social orders and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality and this misconception of Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time."

He was so strongly convinced of the truth of these ideas that he abandoned all attempts to bring the Hindus and Mohammedans together and began to work assiduously for protecting the Muslim from Hindu domination and tyranny. At first he contented himself with getting a few statutory safeguards to protect Mohammedan interests but later on he realised that mere safeguards would not do unless there was political power to back them up. "All safeguards and settlements," he said, "would be a scrap of paper unless they are backed up by power. Politics mean power and not relying only on cries of justice and fair-play or goodwill....."

His first demand came in the form of 14 points in 1934 which he wanted to be embodied in the new Constitution of India which was to be proposed next year. All these 14 points were mainly intended to protect the interests of the Muslims. By these points Jinnah demanded a Federal Constitution for India with autonomous provinces as the federating units. The legislatures should contain adequate representation of the minorities. The election should be by separate communal electorates. In the Central Legislature the Muslims should have at least one-third of the total number of seats. The Muslims should be given an adequate share of services. There should also be provision for the protection of Muslim religion, culture and other special Muslim interests. The Central and Provincial cabinets should have one-third of their seats reserved for Muslims.

When the Government of India Act of 1935 came in for discussion Jinnah fiercely opposed the Federation part of the Act. He, however, agreed that the Provincial scheme was an "advancement" and was willing to accept and work it "for what it is worth."

When the War started in the year 1939, the Congress resigned from the Ministries and demanded from Britain a declaration of their war aims. The Congress pressed for a declaration of India's independence and the calling forth a Constituent Assembly on the basis of adult franchise, to frame a new constitution for India. Jinnah opposed the Congress move for calling forth a Constituent Assembly on the basis of adult franchise because in such an Assembly the Mohammedans must necessarily form a helpless minority. He declared that any new constitution for India must be framed on the basis of two nations. A hundred million people could be minority only arithmetically. Judged by any criterion or test the Muslims

were a separate nation and any future constitution of India must treat them as such.

In the next year, 1940, the Muslim League passed the famous Lahore Resolution embodying what is now well known as Pakistan. Pakistan is based on Jinnah's theory of two nations. According to the Pakistan theory all the provinces in which the Muslims are in a majority should be grouped together to form a separate state or states and the administration of this state or states must be entirely the concern of the Mohammedans and Mohammedans only. ~~Thus~~ the Muslim-majority provinces in the North-east and North-west must become Muslim homelands. According to Jinnah this is the only way for Mohammedans to develop to the fullest extent their cultural, spiritual, economic and political life in a way that they think will be in consonance with their own peculiar ideals and genius.

By passing the Lahore Resolution of 1940 Jinnah has made his demand once for all and he has clung to this demand with uncompromising ~~doggedness~~ up to the present day. On the questions whether Pakistan is desirable for India or not and whether it is economically feasible or workable or not there are acute differences of opinion. But the consensus of educated opinion in India today tends to the view that any division of India on a communal or religious basis will ultimately do more harm than good to India. Among the people who hold this view are many eminent Muslims. It is true that hatred exists between Hindus and Muslims. But Jinnah has greatly exaggerated this hatred and has naturally chosen a remedy which is too drastic and totally unnecessary for the purpose. Pakistan is undoubtedly a remedy but that does not mean that there are not other remedies which do not involve the breaking up of the integrity of India. In his over-enthusiasm to protect his

community he has gone too far. Many eminent men, including Gandhiji, have persuaded him to relax his claim, but Jinnah has remained adamant, insisting on his pound of flesh, and prepared to accept nothing less. In the year 1944 a historic meeting took place between Gandhiji and Jinnah in Bombay. The meeting lasted for several days. Gandhiji tried his best to come to an agreement with Jinnah, but all his efforts ended in failure. He proposed a scheme called the C. R. Formula (because it was framed by C. Rajagopalachari) to Jinnah which, in effect, conceded the substance of Pakistan. But Jinnah refused to accept it because the C. R. Formula insisted on a plebiscite of all the people living in the Pakistan area, being taken before introducing Pakistan.

After the War came to an end in 1945, the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, called together a conference of the leaders of the main political parties with a view to giving them representation in his Executive Council. The conference was held in Simla. Jinnah insisted that all the Muslim members of the Executive Council must be chosen from the Muslim League. This claim was based on the supposition that the Muslim League represents all the Muslims of India. The Congress could not agree to this view. Once more the conference ended in failure.

Jinnah is always well dressed and he has the look of a statesman. He is reserved and imperious, formal and fastidious. His outlook is rational and he is never carried away by emotions. He is not moved by fine words or sentiments. His appeal is always to the head and not to the heart.

He does not like to appear before the public; he addresses very few public meetings. When he does speak in public, his speeches are short and to the point. "He is essentially a solitary man with a large political following but few intimate friends."

Outside the spheres of law and politics he has few attainments. In the words of Sarojini Naidu : "Not his the gracious gifts of mellow scholarship or rich adventure or radiant conversation ; not his the burning passion of philanthropy or religious reform ; the true criterion of his greatness lies not in the range and variety of his knowledge but in the faultless perception and flawless refinement of his subtle mind and spirit and in a lofty singleness of purpose and the lasting charm of a character animated by a brave conception of duty and an austere and lovely code of private honour and public integrity."

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## JAWAHARLAL NEHRU.

( B. 1889— )

What an exemplary self-sacrifice ! What a stupendous energy ! What a mighty intellect ! These are the thoughts that flash across the mind's eye when one thinks in retrospects of the life of Jawaharlal, the great leader of modern India. The only son of a multi-millionaire, brought up amidst unsurpassing ease and comfort, educated at Harrow and Cambridge, the haunts of Princes and higher aristocracy, married to a girl of exceptional beauty and charm—came down the steps of his palace—to the stony and rugged paths of Indian politics, wandered among the 'kisans' through the muddy and stinking village lanes, under the scorching heat of the April sun, spent nights in narrow damp prison cell at Nabha—infested with worms and insects, with hands bound by iron chain, faced repeated lathi-charges which cracked his limbs and bruised his body and embarked on a series of voyages to gaol, broken by brief intervals of release to be marred by the death of his most revered father and his most beloved wife. When Congress agreed to work the 1935 constitution he undertook an election campaign sweeping the length and breadth of India like a tornado, covering forty thousand miles in four months, using every means of conveyance, from aeroplane to bullock-cart, addressing twelve gatherings daily and in all a crore of men and directly contacting several lakhs of individuals. Pundit Nehru viewed India's struggle for independence as a part of the wider struggle of oppressed humanity against capitalism and colonialism, voiced his sympathy for Spain, Abyssinia and China and



Jawaharlal Nehru





as early as 1933 warned the world against the rise of force, the most deadly facet of decaying capitalism until that voice died behind the prison bars. In jail he wrote a closely printed 617 page autobiography and history of the world 1,569 pages long in the form of letters to his daughter. The amazing popularity which this autobiography earned for Jawaharlal can be seen from the fact that within a course of seven months the tenth impression of the book was published. It has been truly said "probably more was accomplished in a few months by this one volume to swing round liberal opinion in the west than had been accomplished by the many years of political struggle that had gone before." Next to Gandhiji, he is the greatest driving force in the national struggle of India. While he has a profound regard for Gandhiji whom he describes as "the quintessence of the conscious and sub-conscious will of the millions of peasant India" his fasts and penance do not attract him and extreme ascetic practices of Gandhiji irritate his scientific mind. Again while Gandhiji lays stress on the inner conversion of the Rajas, landlords and ~~capitalists~~ which will make them the trustees for the welfare of those who are under their control, the modern mind of Jawaharlal looks at the entire system as a vast engine of oppression, a conglomeration of reactionary forces which must go along with the imperialistic rule which favours its growth.

More than two hundred years ago, the Nehru family moved from the hills of Kashmir to the plains of Delhi at the invitation of the then Moghul Emperor. The grand-father and great-grand-father of Jawaharlal held posts under the last Moghuls and created a family tradition of public service. During the Sepoy Mutiny, the rebels set fire to their house and destroyed many valuable papers and documents. The family shifted to Agra and thence to Allahabad. Here in the midst of wealth and affluence, pomp and luxury of westernised style of living,

Jawaharlal was born on the 14th November 1889—the only son of Motilal Nehru, the most renowned lawyer of the day.

Jawaharlal was the only child of the family up to the age of eleven. So he commanded great care and affection from his parents. He was placed in charge of an English governess and later on, an European tutor was engaged for him. As he had few playmates, his mind took a meditative turn. He heard of incidents of the racial arrogance and pride betrayed by Englishmen in their dealings with Indians which filled his mind with hatred against the British ruling class. Under the guidance of his tutor, he developed a taste for literature and science. He read books of travel and adventure and a desire to wander in untrodden paths and to encounter boldly the risks and dangers of life took possession of his mind in boyhood days. He dabbled in theosophy for some time and became a member of the Theosophic Society at the age of thirteen but soon his interest ebbed out.

At the age of fifteen he was taken to England by his father and admitted in the public school at Harrow. At this age, he used to read newspapers regularly and his mind was arrested by international events. The defeat hurled by the Japanese at the Czarist Russia greatly amused him and roused his ambition of freeing his motherland from the shackles of bondage. The tragedies of the Boer war made him conscious of the exploitative tendencies of the British race and his sympathy went with the Boers. He followed the currents and cross-currents of British politics and he was far ahead of his classmates so far as the knowledge of political phenomena was concerned. At school, he obtained the prize of Trevelyan's "Garibaldi And His Thousand" and read the book several times. The exemplary patriotism of the great Italian hero impressed him greatly and he dreamed dreams of fighting sword in hand for the liberation of

his motherland. From Harrow he passed on to Cambridge where he took his tripos in Natural Science and joined the bar. He took interest in the proceeding of the Cambridge Majlis. But he was very shy and felt embarrassed when called upon to speak before an audience. During his stay in England, he developed a scientific outlook, an analytical mind and a sense of the supreme importance of order and discipline. But English life in all its richness and splendour attracted him. So when he came back to India after seven years he was, as he himself confessed, "a bit of a prig."

When Jawaharlal returned, the first World War broke out and India was helping with men and materials the British Empire, to survive the perils that had befallen it. The Indian National Congress was a forum of the moderates passing resolutions and pressing the Government for constitutional reforms. With the end of the war the British rulers repaid their debt to India by the Rowlatt Act which empowered the Police to imprison any suspected person without trial. This led to a country-wide consternation and discontent. At this psychological moment, Gandhiji appeared in the Indian political scene and gave a lead to the Congress by starting the Satyagraha movement. Jawaharlal saw light in the midst of prevailing gloom and his young mind moved with a passion for participation in the Satyagraha movement. Motilal who was still a moderate, grew anxious at the extremist tendencies of his son and cases were frequent in which the political ideas of the father and the son clashed. But love for his only son outweighed all political considerations. The Amritsar tragedy gave a push to Motilal who realising the utter bankruptcy of moderatist politics came nearer to his son in the arena of politics. Thenceforward, father and son fought side by side, braved many disasters and courted long sufferings for advancing the country's cause.

At the request of Gandhiji, Jawaharlal had to drop the idea of joining the Satyagraha movement. He went to Mussourie with his wife and mother. In the same hotel where they put up was staying an Afghan delegation. One day the local police directed him not to have any dealings with the delegation. Jawaharlal knew nothing of it before but he refused to give any undertaking and was externed. During his brief stay in Allahabad, after the externment, a group of peasants came to him from Pratapgarh and narrated their harrowing tales of poverty and suffering owing to the oppressive exactions of the landlords for days. Jawarhalal wandered from village to village through mud and dirt under the April sun and a picture of rural India was revealed to him. He saw thousands of unclerfed, half-naked 'kisans' living in appalling poverty and heard of the grinding tyranny of the landlord. But he saw their faces beaming with new consciousness, hope and gratitude and the idea of improving their lot and bringing them within the fold of the Congress movement hammered his mind since then.

The Jallianwallahbag massacre and Khilafat question sent a wave of discontent throughout the country and the Congress started the non-co-operation movement. Jawaharlal plunged headlong into it. He travelled through the villages preaching the call of the Congress to galvanise the inert masses into fighters of freedom. He forgot all about his family and its comforts and worked for days and nights. He felt a new consciousness of his strength to organise and his capacity to speak before the public. He organised a Congress Volunteer Corps to enforce strikes and hartals on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's visit. But the Government did not allow him to work for long and he suffered his first imprisonment in May, 1922.



Pandit Jawaharlal



The deviation from the path of non-violence at Chauri Chawra led Gandhiji to stop the movement. The new constitutional reforms of 1919 and the question of council-entry divided Congress leaders into two opposite camps. Eventually the Swaraj party was formed under the leadership of Deshbandhu and Motilal. Jawaharlal was released in January, 1923. Repelled by the bickerings of the two wings of the Congress he took municipal work and became the Chairman of the Allahabad Municipality. It has been admitted even by a bitter opponent of him in U.P. who remarked "whatever we may think of young Nehru's Socialistic doctrines and his Bolshevik ideas the efficient way in which he handled the Allahabad Municipality as Chairman was beyond all praise." At this time, another incident occurred which was to have a permanent influence upon his political convictions. A trouble arose in the Nabha State where the Resident forbade the Akalis to perform a religious ceremony and send Jathas to a place called Jaits. Nehru responded to the call of the Punjabis and went to the spot, to be handcuffed and put in a filthy prison cell. His trial was a farce. The Magistrate was quite illiterate and led by the dictates of the police. Star Chamber methods were practised and he was not allowed to defend himself. This incident opened his eyes to the medieval and anachronistic system of administration of the States and he felt the urge to organise a movement of the State people for the abolition of the despotic rules imposed upon them. As he returned home from Nabha prison Jawaharlal was attacked with typhoid fever and his health broke down. He sailed for Europe towards the close of 1926 to recuperate his health.

During his stay in Europe Jawaharlal travelled Italy, Switzerland, Brussels, Germany and Russia. He joined the Brussels Conference of oppressed nationalities and felt that

## EMINENT INDIANS

India's struggle for freedom is but a part of the international upheaval of oppressed nationalities. In Russia he studied the Soviet planned economy with an open mind and became convinced that Socialism is the panacea for the poverty of the masses and without it political freedom is meaningless. After his return he gave vent to his Socialistic ideas at the All-Parties Conference which was called to frame a constitution for the responsible Government in India. He criticised the moderate pursuit of the Congress for Dominion Status and by his insistence, independence became the ultimate goal of the Congress. He joined demonstrations against the Simon Commission and boldly faced the repeated lathi charges of the police.

In the year 1929 the Lahore Session of the A. I. C. C. elected Jawaharlal to be one of the youngest Presidents of the Congress. Jawaharlal emphasised that complete independence is the goal towards which all the efforts of the Congress must be directed. He referred to the economic condition of the masses, their poverty and low standard of living and traced its cause to the existence of the Imperialistic masters and a parasitical class of landlords and profit-seeking capitalists. The State must abolish the feudal system and control the key industries in an effort to raise the economic condition of the masses. In its struggle for independence the Congress must not lose sight of the economic issues affecting the lives of India's teeming millions.

In 1930, the Salt Satyagraha was launched by the Congress and as the President of the Congress Jawaharlal set himself to work and make preparations for the success of the campaign. He was arrested in April, 1930 and sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment. On January, 1931 he was released due to the serious illness of his father. At last Motilal



breathed his last. This gave him a stunning blow, as it was to him a two-fold loss—the loss of a beloved father and a constant comrade.

The influence of Jawaharlal was felt in the Karachi Congress of 1931 which adopted his socialistic ideas and embodied them in resolutions which stressed the need for radical agrarian reforms and state control of key industries. In December, 1931, he was arrested and released in August, 1933 when his mother was seriously ill. After release he visited Bihar to see the ravages of earthquake and organise relief for the sufferers. Thence he went to Bengal and was arrested again in February, 1934 on charge of a seditious speech. This imprisonment lasted till February, 1935.

The Civil Disobedience Movement, came to an end and the Round Table Conference failed. The storm clouds passed away from the political horizon of India. World events like the strangling of China by Japan and the failure of Social democracy in Europe under the pressure of fascism attracted the gaze of Jawaharlal. He wrote a series of articles in 'Whither India' where he criticised the Indian National Movement as permeated by middle-class interests. In 1935 the illness of his wife became acute and after his release Jawaharlal flew with her to the German health resort of Badenweiler. Thence he went to England and exposed before the British public the truncated nature of the Indian constitution which he characterised as a "charter of bondage". He set the proper perspective to the communal problem and explained how it faded before social and economic issues. Kamala died on the 25th February, 1936, a few days after Jawaharlal had received the news of his election as the Congress President. Her death affected him deeply. As he wrote later, "My wife's death in Switzerland ended a chapter of my existence and took away much from my

life that had been part of my being". But with courage he withstood the shock and eagerly responded to the call of his country-men.

In the Lucknow session of the Congress Jawaharlal gave an outspoken exposition of his Socialistic creed. The Struggle of India against British Imperialism is the Asiatic counterpart of the struggle waged by the progressive forces against fascism in Europe. He made a trenchant criticism of the new constitution and warned the Right wing Congressmen against the contingency of office acceptance and betrayal of the masses by giving up the ideal of complete Independence. He reformed the Congress Working Committee by associating with it leftist members like Acharya Narendra Deo, Achut Patwardhan and Jai Prakash Narayana. He started a Civil Liberties Campaign and organised Civil Liberties Unions to check the fascist tendencies of the Government in their partial administration of the laws and curtailment of civil liberties of the masses by new laws. Another innovation introduced by him was the establishment of the A. I. C. C. Foreign Department to carry on propaganda in foreign countries about the Indian National Movement and thus to create mass sympathies in its favour. His eyes crossed the Frontiers of India and caught glimpses of the events in Palestine and Abyssinia and he sent messages of sympathy to each. Thus he broadened the perspective of the Congress outlook towards freedom and henceforward it lent its moral support to every freedom movement of oppressed humanity in any part of the world.

On December, 11, 1930 the country did Jawaharlal the unique honour by electing him to be the Congress President for the third time. He vehemently criticised the new constitution but favoured Congress participation in election as but one phase of the struggle—a signal of the mass verdict against the

constitution. In 1937 he made an extensive tour of the Surma valley in Assam and Karnatic in the South and visited Malaya and Burma to contact the Indian labourers of those places and see with his own eyes their economic lot. In July, 1938, he visited Spain where the people were engaged in a historic struggle against Fascism, saw the bombing of Barcelona and met Delvyas, Passiodaria and Lister, the great Spanish leaders. Coming back to India he sent food to the Spanish Republicans who were running short of it. His conviction of the unholy league between Fascism and Imperialism against the rights and interest of the common men of the world became firmly rooted in his mind.

Early in 1939 the pent up feelings of the people living in the States of India, saddled with mediaeval autocracies burst. Rajkot, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mysore and Travancore were the storm-centres of popular reaction. Jawaharlal took upon himself the task of co-ordinating the activities of the States' people. As the first President of the States' Peoples' Conference he condemned the Princely rule as anachronistic and ignominious offshoot of British Imperialism and reiterated his determination to link the struggle of the States' people with the wider struggle for Indian independence. In March, 1938, while addressing the Indian Science Congress, Jawaharlal narrated the wonders achieved by the Economic Planning in Russia and urged the importance of national planning in India in which scientists and experts would play a vital role. Later on, his ideas took concrete shape in the formation of the National Planning Committee. The Congress Session at Tripuri in 1939 brought about the long-expected clash between the two trends within the Congress—one clinging to a reformist parliamentary programme and the other standing for a revolutionary mass programme. Jawaharlal remained neutral

## EMINENT INDIANS

and pleaded for unity and "burying the hatchet." He warned the members against the menace of another World War and emphasised the need for putting up a united front against India's participation in it. The Chinese struggle for freedom exercised a great fascination for Jawaharlal and in August, 1939 he went to China and saw the great Chiang and the leaders of the brave Communist party.

In September, 1940 the Congress decided on individual Civil Disobedience and all the members of the A. I. C. C. including Jawaharlal were confined without trial. He was released shortly before Japan declared war. The Cripps offer failed and in August, 1942 the A. I. C. C. resolved to start a mass struggle on non-violent lines. On the day before Gandhi could make a last appeal for settlement to the Viceroy the latter let loose a reign of terror and all the leaders of the Congress were clapped into prison. In those critical days of the nation's history, the counsel of Jawaharlal and his reflections on international situation played a great part in shaping the policies of the Indian National Congress.

The fall of Germany, the general election in England and the Wavell Plan led to the release of the members of the Congress Working Committee. Coming out of the prison bars Jawaharlal paid his tribute to the martyrs who shed their blood in the great revolt of 1942, attacked the British Government for using fascist methods of oppression to suppress the spontaneous movement of the masses and cast his flings at the profiteers and blackmarketeers who aggravated the Bengal famine. Later on he organised a Defence Council for the captive heroes of the Indian National Army—an organisation created outside India by Shri Subhas Chandra Bose to fight for country's freedom and after many years put on the counsel's robe. Through numerous speeches he electrified the political

darkness that settled upon India and mobilised the mass opinion and support for the release of the I. N. A. personnel. Then, on the eve of election, he embarked upon an extensive tour covering many thousand miles over Northern and Eastern parts of India, carrying the messages of the Congress to the remotest corners of India. Under his guidance the unfinished work of the National Planning Committee has been resumed. Presiding over the States' Peoples' Conference he exhorted the Rulers to introduce responsible government and found out the solution of the States' problem in a merger of small states in the adjoining provinces to form autonomous units of the federation of free India.

Still his restless spirit moves on and India resounds with his voice which calls Indians irrespective of caste, creed or colour to rally round the Congress banner for the final struggle against British Imperialism in search of freedom and economic liberty for the masses.

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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad



## MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

( B. 1888— )

Rashtrapati (President) or the showboy of the Indian National Congress, as Mr. Jinnah described him once, which of the two is he ? What opinion the Presidents of the Republics of America, China and Turkey have formed about the two opposing personalities of India, namely Maulana Azad, and Mr. Jinnah—the two great rivals in Indian Politics when they heard the Mussalman Parliamentarian indulging in this undignified language, especially when the Rashtrapati did not retort back the slang, which recoiled to its author with greater force than it was thrown ! Silent and dignified Abul Kalam—a believer in Prophet Mohammad's teaching of fortitude and forbearance and a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi's 'Satya' and 'Ahimsa', has shown the contrast in the two characters and their respective capacities for the leadership of India. The rebirth of Mr. Jinnah's leadership of the Indian Mussalmans and the revival of the Muslim League after fifteen years, coincided with the leadership of the Congress by the election of Maulana Azad to the Presidential chair almost at a time when the Muslim League had entered upon the threshold of the aggressive programme presented to the Muslim Nation after passing the famous resolution of Pakistan at Lahore in the year 1940.

\* Both the Congress and the League have placed two Mussalmans for the leadership of India, Abul Kalam Azad and Jinnah, standing face to face with each other. The question was who was to lead. The Bombay-millionaire barrister fed in the earlier part of his political and professional

career by the silver spoon of Nature that placed a wealthy Parsee wife's fortune at the young Karachi Khoja's disposal, which was very similar to the case of the Arabian Prophet, whose first wife's (Khadja) fortune gave him the fillip required during the struggling period of his life. Mohammed Ali Jinnah of those days was also a Congressman and the Indian Nation had then great hopes from him. Gokhale was fond of him and had seen the great parliamentarian in him. Young Sarojini Naidu, the nightingale of the Congress had admired the starch and glow of Jinnah's Polo Collar. The city of Bombay had built the Jinnah Hall in recognition of his national services. In 1940 Jinnah should have been the President of the Indian National Congress, but he was replaced by Abul Kalam. The question is how did this man come in and usurp the crown of the Indian Nation from the fastidious, immaculately dressed, wealthy, luxurious, ease-loving barrister of Bombay, who had so well qualified himself for the highest office in possession of the Indian Nation. This rivalry would give a clue to the opening remark in this article, made by Jinnah about Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

Young Abul Kalam Azad had his early education of Arabic and Persian at Lucknow in the famous Arabic University or College called Nadwatul Ulema—Nadwa, where the great writer, Maulana Shibli Nomani (the author of the most famous book *Siratun-Nabi* or the Prophet's biography) was a professor,—Nadwa, whose founder Munsifi Athar Ali, the brilliant leading lawyer of the Province of Oudh, had a vision of founding an Arabic University on the model of Jamai-Azhar, the famous Arabic University in Egypt. Nadwa, now the biggest institution for oriental Islamic studies in the East, which produced Arabic and Persian scholars of repute like Allama Syed Suleman Nadvi, Masud Nadvi, Habibur Rahman Nadvi, had the proud privilege

of educating and sending out Abul Kalam Azad as the first great pioneer of the freedom of India and of the Islamic world. Maulana Shibli Nomanî, Maulana Farooque, Maulana Khalilur Rahman and last of all Maulana Hafezullah had been the teachers of Abul Kalam at Nadwa. From these masters Abul Kalam studied Fika, Hadis, Logic, Philosophy and Literature. Each of these teachers had a very high reputation in India for his own subject.

Not only that, the founder of Nadwa was famous throughout the Province for his generosity, piety and philanthropy. Young Abul Kalam was given a room in the house of Munshi Athar Ali in Aminabad for some time to stay and complete his education in the institution of the founder. Part of the expenses of his education was borne by the Bhopal State or its Prime Minister, Munshi Imtiaz Ali, the cousin of Munshi Athar Ali and young Abul Kalam's sister Abroo Begum was given an allowance to complete her studies and act as companion to the Begum of Bhopal, whose private secretary she became.

Without love, the life history of a great man cannot be complete, for love is the salt of life and elixir of life. The home of Abul Kalam at Calcutta provides ample testimony to this. If Omar Khayyam, Ghalib and Iqbal, great literary world figures could only compose their rhymes when ministering angel visited them with the goblet of wine, to pour grand noble ideas and lofty thoughts to enliven and elevate down-trodden depressed humanity from its sordid mood and look at the brighter side of life, why should Abul Kalam be an exception to this general rule, when he belongs to the same galaxy of men?

What Iqbal, Hali, Shibli could achieve through their religious and national poetry by composing rhymes, Abul Kalam created that by his prose and speech.

As the founder of the famous 'Al-Hilal', a daily Newspaper at Calcutta, he wrought a change in Indian Politics and the Islamic world, that no other Alim in the Muslim world had done previously. And his editorials not only on Indian Affairs but on Pan-Islamism, on the interference of the British and French Nations in the affairs of Egypt, Turkey, Arabia and Persia were written with such ability, knowledge, profundity and force that the Egyptian and Arabian Press published them in their countries' prominent daily papers, periodicals and journals. Abul Kalam was treated as an authority on oriental politics. He wrote with the same force, ease and facility in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages. His articles on Egypt and Arabia were written in Arabic that was so chaste and pure that even the Arabs marvelled at it. His diction and choice of phrases were taken and cited as masterpieces of Arabic Literature. Abul Kalam is a master of his own literary style. And behind that fine style stands the man himself to bear testimony to his personality, calm, cool, dignified and clear-headed, with a cut and dried programme before him, no sommersaults, no turning back, no compromises of the opportunist, from the beginning to the end a nationalist throughout, much before the advent of Mahatma Gandhi into the arena of Indian Politics.

Not only that Abul Kalam wrote for his paper 'Al-Hilal' in Urdu but for all the journals, magazines and newspapers of India, that were regarded as standard papers in the country. His sentences were like sword-thrusts, that cut many a limb and sinew of the English politicians from Palmerston, Gladstone, Morley and Minto to the time of Chelmsford and Reading, when Abul Kalam was taken as a recognized rebel, to be thrown into prison by the British Bureaucracy.

Abul Kalam is a scholar of Arabic, Persian and Urdu, all

alike. His Urdu style is faultless, grand but not affected. Yet the Arabic phrase predominates in his writings. He has instilled into Urdu prose that elasticity of the phrase for which the Arabic language is famous in the world. What Ghalib, the greatest Urdu poet did for Urdu through the medium of his poetry by introducing the Persian metaphor and simile so freely with Brij-Bhasha, the same kind of work has been accomplished by Abul Kalam in the realm of Urdu prose. Abul Kalam through his writings has made it possible to express any political, religious, or literary idea in Urdu prose, not done by any religious 'divine or political thinker.

Urdu prose had no serious, thoughtful literature or style which could be made the vehicle of expression for ideas on this modern subject of politics, before the writings of Abul Kalam and Maulana Mohammed Ali, the Editor of the "Daily Hamdard" and the famous "Comrade."

The only contemporary and serious rival that Abul Kalam had was another Muslim nationalist, a genius of Aligarh, Maulana Mohammed Ali.

Mohammed Ali had the advantage of English knowledge over Abul Kalam, who had not studied English at all (till recently in the Jails at the end of his career he has picked up some rudiments of it). Yet the city of Calcutta had two intensely national Muslim scholars, who were contemporaries, and editing two of the most powerful dailies of India in Urdu, Abul Kalam writing for his 'Al-Hilal' and Mohammed Ali for his 'Hamdard.'

Both had the gifts of style and were born journalists. Both had the same ideal before them, namely the Freedom of India. Both believed in the principle of fight and wanted to wrestle power from the hands of the foreigners. Both agreed on the policies of the Indian Mussalmans in regard to the rest of the

Muslim world. Both wrote with equal fervour and zeal against the British people and their policies pursued in India and the Islamic lands. But the difference in the two personalities showed only the difference of style. On paper you could see the impress of Mohammed Ali's full personality in the columns of the 'Hamdard' as that of a haughty, impatient, intensely sincere martyr in the cause of India's freedom and the fighter in the cause of humanity at large with particular reference to the Islamic lands.

Against this the articles of Abul Kalam contributed to Al-Hilal, Hamdard, the Hamdam of Delhi and the Medina Akhbar of Bijnaur revealed a cool, calculated, detached scholar, equally sincere in his desire for freedom, but less sentimental and overbearing.

But both came under the spell of Mahatma Gandhi as soon as this apostle of non-violence and 'Satya' entered the field of Indian politics.

Before this time Abul Kalam and Mohammed Ali were writing forcefully and fearlessly against the partition of Arabia and the dismemberment of Turkey. The Balkan War had come to an end. Mohammed Ali had visited England for the second time in connection with the Cawnpore Mosque affair and Abul Kalam was left alone in the field of Indian Journalism and Urdu Press to attack the British politicians through the columns of his paper.

Besides being a writer, Abul Kalam is the greatest Urdu speaker that India has ever produced. His speeches have been collected by certain Indian Publishers. They rank among the masterpieces of Urdu literature and can favourably be compared with any orations of the world,—logic, reason, rhetoric and literary excellence are equally blended. In this field too Maulana Mohammed Ali was his rival. But the same

distinction of style marks the difference in the two speakers. While Mohammed Ali was fiery, Abul Kalam was cold logician. The standard of Abul Kalam's speeches has been high. It is free from cheap phrases, rich in matter and synonyms, with a great preponderance of Arabic phrases and quotations of the Holy Koran, yet very convincing, clear and impressive. Thus his mastery over pen and tongue had brought him to the forefront of Indian Politics before the year 1919.

The leading Ulemas (divines or religious masters) had formed the Jamiatul-Ulemai-Hind, and Abul Kalam was its president in order to give the proper lead to the Mussalmans of India to protest against the activities of the British in Palestine and Arabia.

At the same time Maulana Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali who had formed the Khudame-Kaba (the league or band of men for service of the Kaba) had launched an attack against the British and their intervention and entry into Mecca and other Muslim Holy-lands.

While the two organizations were functioning separately, Maulana Abul Kalam was regarded more of a religious leader than a politician; whereas Moulana Mohammed Ali was considered more of a political figure than a religious leader. But both of them were the spokesmen of the Mussalmans of India, interested more in the Pan-Islamic affairs than in Indian politics.

In India the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms came, the Jallianwallabagh agitation was started and Mahatma Gandhi took the lead in Indian politics. Simultaneously the Ali Brothers started the Khilafat agitation with the formation of the All India Khilafat Committee, when the British Government made the last Caliph Sultan Abdul Hamid a tool in their hands after

his deposition, followed by the establishment of the Republic in Turkey, with Mustpha Kemal as its President.

Maulana Abul Kalam threw the full weight of his personality in support of the Khilafat agitation and thus brought the Ulemas and politicians of India on a common platform.

Maulana Abdul Bari, the famous divine of Farangi Mahal, Lucknow and the religious Guru of the Ali Brothers preached the Jihad of Islam against the British.

Thus the Khilafat movement on one side united the two schools of Muslim thought and it made common cause with the Indian National Congress. In this manner Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad joined hands together with the Ali Brothers. These four men under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi launched the Non-co-operation movement in India. From that time onward, the life of Maulana Azad is more or less identified with the activities of the Indian National Congress.

It was at the Aligarh Muslim University, the citadel of Muslim culture and civilization where the real propagandist of Islam and the supporters of the Khilafat movement could be found. At the instance of Maulana Mohammed Ali and Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad visited Aligarh to inspire the students of the University to leave their studies and migrate all over India for propaganda and publicity work. Leaders and Ulemas including Dr. Ansari, Hakeem Ajmel Khan, Maulana Azad Sobhani and Maulana Husain Ahmed, all addressed the students of Aligarh and persuaded them to join the Non-co-operation movement. But the students did not seem convinced of taking the fatal step of giving up their studies. The members of the staff were still more sober and had their vested interests, having served the institution for several years, thus being entitled to pensions and gratuities or



reserved funds. Senior students who were finishing their educational career in the final classes of Law and M. A. had their own stakes. All chances of government services and future prospects of honoured positions were to be sacrificed at the altar of freedom. The battle for India's liberation had to be fought,—the generals were there, but neither soldiers nor leaders to guide the people of this vast sub-continent could be had. The Indian National Army had to be formed but the pioneers to run about the length and breadth of the whole country to awaken the masses had not been found. Aligarh University was selected by the National leaders to provide those bands of men who could carry the National Message to the masses in the thousands of villages and towns of India. But the question was who was to convince such an intellectual audience as the senior students and members of the staff of the University of Aligarh ?

The speeches of Maulana Mohammed Ali and Mahatma Gandhi had created a deep impression on the minds of the students,—their souls were touched, and they believed in the righteousness of the cause. Maulana Azad Sobhani coolly and dispassionately placed the demand of the nation before the students. But all this was not enough to convince the staff and students to take the fatal step. None seemed to be prepared to forget his future and to throw in his lot to sacrifice the personal interest in order to serve the larger interest. Be it to the credit of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, whose quiet, convincing, logical arguments left no room for any doubt in the minds of the Aligarh boys and the professors that after hearing his masterly analysis of the whole situation, they gave their verdict in favour of the National Movement and joined the Non-co-operators to carry on the battle of freedom. Abul Kalam had scored, where Gandhi and Mohammed Ali had failed.

That was an open test to the oratorical powers of India's greatest speaker and the platform of Aligarh had provided that occasion. That speech of Abul Kalam will go down in the annals of Hindustan as a remarkable achievement, unparalled in its own way. For it was the Aligarh boys who put the real life and fire in the Khilafat and the Non-co-operation movement. Without their India-wide activity, the agitation could not have reached the masses. From that time onwards the life of Maulana Azad is not the life of an individual, but that of an instrument of a big machine, the Indian National Congress, whose policy and programme he followed faithfully.

Up till now politics to Abul Kalam and Maulana Mohmamed Ali only meant writings in the press and delivering speeches. They went from place to place sitting on motor cars and carriages driven in by processions. They were entertained lavishly by the high dignitaries and merchant princes of Calcutta, Bombay and Karaehi. Moulana Abul Kalam in the company of the Ali Brothers indulged in all pleasures of life and the conception of a true leader's life of the Nation had not dawned upon them or their associates. None of the Muslim leaders had any idea of plain living and high thinking. To this part of the Prophet's life neither Abul Kalam nor Mohammed Ali had attached any importance, rather they had totally forgotten it, although both cited the Scripture very often in their speeches and referred to the holy Prophet as the Saviour of humanity in the path of freedom.

But the magic wand of Mahatma Gandhi had worked wonders. Soon Moulana Abul Kalam Azad and even the extravagant Moulana Mohammed Ali began to realize that leadership did not only require the qualities of being a good speaker and forceful writer but something more namely, simple

habits and plain living, and over and above strong moral character and abstemious habits.

Being thus convinced by Mahatma Gandhi both Abul Kalam and Mohammed Ali adopted simplicity in their lives. Maulana Abul Kalam who used to wear silk garments and Mohammed Ali who put on valuable English clothes gave them up. That was the time when the fashionable Motilal, whose clothes were alleged to be washed in the laundries of Paris had burnt the costly suits and donned the Khaddar cap. Thus Gandhi had taught Abul Kalam the forgotten lesson of the Prophet Mohammed, who had not more than one garment in his house when a guest came to pay a visit and the Prophet was waiting inside the bath-room till his old clothes, that were washed, were dry.

Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Azad was converted from the easy arm-chair politician into an active 'satyagrahi' undergoing all the troubles and hardships of prison-life. The Government of India banned the Non-co-operation movement and threw all the leaders into prison. To Azad politics became religion and all his religion was the freedom of India. It was then that the truth dawned upon him that in Islam all religion is politics and all politics is religion. It was then that he and Mohammed Ali along with Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari began to realize the true value of the active life of the Prophet Mohammed, who had been actually persecuted, harrassed and hunted all his life for following the path of truth. This is what was meant by Gandhi's 'Satya'.

The wave of the Non-co-operation passed away and with the advent of Lord Irwin, the Congressmen were out of prison and the famous Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed. All the time Abul Kalam remained a faithful lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi till the second Satyagraha Campaign and the famous Dandi march to

break the Salt Tax Act. For the second time he was imprisoned. All through these periods Moulana Abul Kalam was leading the Jamiatul-Ulemai-Hind. He was then joined by another more devout, pious, and active Mujjahid, Shaikul Hind, Maulana Mahmudul Hasan of Deoband, who had been interned in Malta by the British Government. The policy of the Jamiatul-Ulemai-Hind had under the leadership of these two men, became more forward than the Congress. For Maulana Mahmudul Hasan was a believer in the active Jihad with the sword, on the pattern of the holy Prophet, who practised 'Ahimsa' as much as Mahatma Gandhi did. But where non-violence (Ahimsa) failed and a higher price was demanded by God Almighty in the cause of human freedom, then the greater Satyagrahi was he who offered his life, even physically to be destroyed at the altar of liberty. In this Maulana Husain Ahmed Madani co-operated with his Guru the Shaikul Hind.

Abul Kalam understands Islam better than any other Mussalman, but he is also a very sagacious politician. So while in jail, the second time, he started writing the most authoritative commentary of the Koran and explained the meaning of Jihad (Religious war) by the sword, by the pen and Jihad Bin Nafs. Here he pointed out the danger of the Jihad by the sword, seeing the weak conditions of the Mussalmans of India, having no weapons of destruction in their hands whereas the opponents were well equipped.

At this time there occurred a division in the rank and file of the Jamiatul-Ulemai-Hind. One school was led by Mufti Kifayat Ullah of Delhi and another by Maulana Ahmad Saeed of Deoband. A schism had been formed in the body of the Ulemas so Maulana Abul Kalam Azad quietly disassociated himself with the organization of the Ulemas and now concentrated on the activities of the Congress alone.

From the year 1921 onwards it can safely be said that Maulana Azad lost all senses of the personal life and has thenceforward lived a life wholly dedicated to the nation.

The Muslim League, the only Muslim Organization of the Mussalmans since 1906 had been the political forum of the community from whose platform Maulana Mohammed Ali, Mr. Jinnah, the Raja of Mahmudabad, Sir Ali Imam, Sir Shafi, Sir Iqbal, Dr. Ansari and Maulana Abul Kalam came into prominence in Indian politics, but it had now fallen to bad days, because Mr. Jinnah had quarrelled with the governor of Bombay and left India to practise in the Privy Council in England. The Aga Khan, the former patron of the Muslim League had abandoned residence in India and was much more interested in the Derby Races and his stables.

The Maharaja of Mahmudabad, the financier of the Muslim League at whose residence all the knights of his Round Table including Mohammed Ali Jinnah assembled, had been made the Home member of the U. P. Government and so the Round Table had been dissolved. The Muslim League lay widowed of its power and former glory.

A new organization formed by the opportunist Muslim politicians like the Nawab of Chattari, Sir Abdulla Haroon, Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, Sir Shafi Ahmad Khan, the Raja of Salimpur, Nawab Sir Mohammed Yusuf, Maulana Shafi Daudi had been found to replace the Muslim League. This organization was opposed to the Congress. But Maulana Abul Kalam never associated himself with this new organization. He had become a blue congressite and in company with Dr. Syed Mahmud of Behar had on occasions taken some measures to counteract the Anti-National moves of this organization by issuing certain statements to the press during the great Bihar earth-quake.

But ~~after the first~~ Non-co-operation movement, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad had become a nationalist and in the company of late Motilal and Maulana Abul Kalam carried on the agitation against the visit of Sir John Simon.

Then the Muslim League was lying half dead.

Dr. Ansari, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, Chaudhri Khaliqneuzzaman with the assistance of Dr. Safuddin Kitchlu formed the new Muslim organization called "the Nationalist Muslims" indicating thereby that the views of the members of this National organization were more advanced and though the sympathies of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were with this new progressive organisation yet he did not quit the Congress. He held fast to the Indian National Congress and stuck to its programme and creed. Of course it must be said that, although Maulana Azad had by now qualified himself to belong to the High command of the Congress, yet he never gave any lead. The Congress has been so much dominated by Mahatma Gandhi that ever since he took charge of it since 1920 ~~it is~~ he and he alone who really leads it. The programme of 'charkha' and the creed of Non-violence and Satya have been prescribed by Mahatma Gandhi, to which all the members subscribe.

The Government of India Act of 1935 promised self Government to India and the Congress accepted offices by forming ministries in the Provinces.

But as soon as the War of 1939 approached the Government tried to interfere and created deadlocks with a view to have the reins of the Government in their own hands during the course of the war.

The Congress, on the other hand wanted to be out of office in order to carry on destructive propaganda freely against the British Government during the course of the war, so they vacated the ministerial benches.

The Muslim League had been revived by the return of Mr. Jinnah in India at the instance of Mr. Azhar Ali, an ex-secretary of the old Muslim League. The young Raja of Mahmudabad, the son of the late Maharaja, had come of age and the coffers of his estate were again open to bear the expenses of the organisation of the Muslim League. The rejuvenated Muslim League came into existence and on the occasion of the Congress vacating office, the Muslim League formed ministries in Provinces wherever there were Muslim majorities excepting the Punjab. Opposed to this there was Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presiding in the Bombay Maidan passing the 'Quit India' resolution from the platform of the Indian National Congress.

The Rashtrapati was behind the prison walls when Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah was condemning the action of the Rashtrapati and his followers and putting his demand of 'Pakistan' or the formation of separate Independent Muslim States in the Provinces of the North Western Frontier, Kashmir, Sind, the Punjab, Bengal and Assam. The Lahore resolution of 1940, that put forward the demand of Pakistan was not new. Sir Abdullah Haroon had put the same resolution at the Muslim League Conference held in Sind at Karachi in the year 1938, when Jinnah was driven in a procession starting from the poor looking thatched hut, the residence of the Qaide-Azam (the great leader) Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Then, in that conference Jinnah had attached no importance to this resolution put forward by Abdullah Haroon of Ottawa Conference fame. Yes, Jinnah had even failed to appreciate the implications of Pakistan when its real author, the late Sir Mohammed Iqbal had explained to him at his own residence many years back. But now the Qaide-Azam has converted his 14 points into the demand for Pakistan or separate homelands

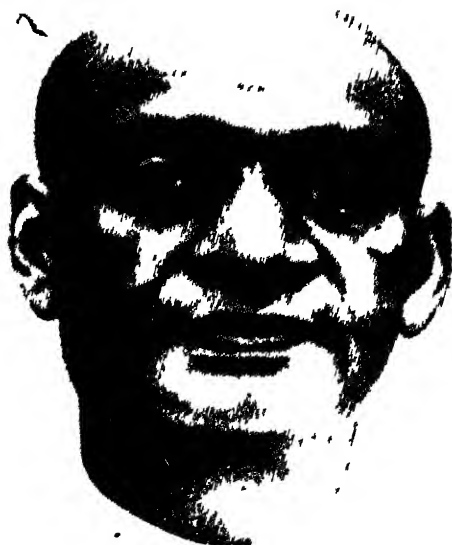
## EMINENT INDIANS

for the Mussalmans of India quite apart from the Hindus—and this demand of his, the great Pan Islamist, Abul Kalam will not concede. Jinnah claims to be the spokesman of the 8 ~~crores~~ of the Mussalmans of India. Against him Abul Kalam says that ~~he~~ speaks for the 33 crores of the Indians irrespective of creeds, of Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians. This is Rashtrapati Abul Kalam or the show-boy of the Congress.

*Note.* The only comprehensive book written in Urdu by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is one volume on the commentary of the Holy Koran. His speeches and writings have been collected by the various presses in India.







Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

## SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

( B. 1875— )

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel takes his place in that small galaxy of patriots who have dominated the Indian political scene during the last several years. John Gunther has aptly called him the ruthless fist of the Congress triumvirate, the other two of the triumvirate being Abūl Kalam Azad and Rajendra Prasad. Patel is pre-eminently a man of action and his services to the Congress have been mainly rendered in that capacity. He has no love for theorists and idealists and he has never tried to conceal his contempt for them. A crack organiser of ruthless efficiency, his one track mind is accustomed to doing one thing at a time and he has thus developed a habit of getting things done. "The man of action is writ large on his countenance, a curious facial blend of Lenin and Tilak—defiant high mastoids running into an uncompromising mouth".

He cannot brook opposition from anybody. Those who have tried to oppose him have suffered terribly for it. He 'fired' one Premier (Dr. N. B. Khare) and prevented another man (Mr. K. F. Nariman) from becoming one. In his native province of Gujerat he has undisputed sway over the people. His word is gospel to them and they are always prepared to do his bidding. As Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee he virtually controlled the Congress ministries in seven provinces.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was born in the Kaira District in the Province of Bombay. His father, Javeribhai, had become famous by fighting against the British Government in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Vallabhbhai thus inherited his rebellious

spirit from his father. As a boy he was very mischievous and unruly and his teachers found it very difficult to curb him.

After matriculating, he passed the pleadership examination and set up practice as a pleader at Godhra. But he was not satisfied by being a mere pleader; he wanted to become a barrister. By hard work he soon saved enough money to enable him to go to England and study for the bar. In the bar examination he fared exceedingly well, standing first class first and securing a scholarship and freeship. He returned to India as a barrister and set up practice in Ahmedabad.

As a lawyer he evinced a singular taste for criminal cases. He had a special aptitude to deal with cases of murder, arson and dacoity. He was a terror even to the judiciary. The story goes that the Resident Magistrate's Court was shifted from Borsad to Anand just to avoid Patel, but when Patel set up practice at Anand the court was immediately brought back to Borsad.

His first noteworthy entry into politics was made in 1918. In that year a devastating famine swept through Gujerat. The stricken peasants clamoured for exemption from the land-tax. The Government turned a deaf ear to their cries. At this juncture Gandhiji stepped in; he exhorted the people to resort to 'Satyagraha'. It was Gandhiji's first experiment in India. Vallabhbhai Patel looked upon the 'South African Barrister' and his 'antics' with supercilious contempt. But the contempt did not last long; it soon gave way to a veneration which has persisted till this day. The magnetic personality of the Mahatma with his indefatigable energy and self-confidence fascinated Patel. He threw in his lot with Gandhiji in the peasant Satyagraha which ultimately proved successful. The peasant Satyagraha was followed by a mill-strike in Ahmedabad in the same year. Once more Gandhi and Patel fought with

the weapon of Satyagraha and compelled the mill-owners to come to terms. Thus Patel became a close adherent and trusted lieutenant of Gandhiji and has remained so ever since.

Close upon these events followed the famous Jallianwall-Bagh affair. The Congress decided to launch a Non-co-operation campaign this time on an all-India scale. Patel was to be one of the leaders of the movement. It was started after giving due notice to the Viceroy. But hardly had the movement started when a mob burst out into violence in Chauri-Chaura. Gandhiji, who wanted the movement to be conducted strictly along non-violent lines immediately called off the movement.

It was in the year 1928 that Vallabhbhai's fame reached its zenith. In that year Patel successfully organised and led a peasants' revolt in Bardoli. The cause of the trouble was the Government's decision to increase the land-tax. The majority of the people were very poorly off and the existing tax itself was a great burden for them. So when the Government decided to further increase the tax, naturally they cried loudly against the move and opposed it bitterly. But the Government remained adamant, determined to collect the enhanced assessment. Patel immediately hurried to help the people. He strongly persuaded them to resort to united passive resistance. The discontented people readily responded to the leader's call. Soon the movement spread to other parts of India. The Congress members of the Bombay Legislative Council resigned and Vithalbhai Patel, the President of the Central Assembly, forced the issue. The Government climbed down and offered some terms; Patel rejected them as insufficient. Then Gandhiji brought a proposal which was acceptable both to the Government and the people. When the Government agreed to that proposal, Satyagraha was called off. Patel had triumphed again and this triumph raised him to great heights of fame and popularity.

In the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1928 the Congress declared their aim to be 'Purna Swaraj' unless India was given Dominion Status within one year. Nothing turned up during that year and so in the next session of the Congress held at Lahore, the Congress resolved to start a Civil Disobedience movement on a nation-wide scale. In April, 1930 Gandhiji inaugurated the movement by his dramatic march to the Dandi beach and breaking the Salt Laws. Patel took up the leadership in Gujarat. "Now the die is cast and there is no turning back"—with these words he exhorted the Gujarat peasantry to join the campaign. When they expressed a fear of their lands being confiscated, he confronted them with a simple logic: "What is confiscation? Will they take away your lands to England?" Patel was arrested and sentenced to imprisonment. But his imprisonment only added fuel to the fire. Seventy-five thousand people assembled in a meeting at Ahmedabad and resolved to go the same way that Vallabhbhai had gone. Several Government servants resigned their jobs and courted imprisonment. A no-tax campaign raged in Gujarat. At last the Government felt compelled to terms; the Gandhi-Irwin pact was signed and the movement was brought to an end. The Sardar was not quite satisfied with the pact and he frankly said so in the Karachi Session of the Congress of which he was the President.

This Satyagraha movement of 1930 threw Vallabhbhai into greater prominence and established his claim to be the undisputed leader of Gujarat. The people soon showed their gratitude by conferring upon him the greatest honour that any Indian can wish to have—the presidentship of the Congress. He was elected President of the next session of the Congress which was held at Karachi. He must himself have felt highly embarrassed when so great an honour was thrust on him un-

expectedly ; for, he said, "you have called a simple farmer to the highest office to which an Indian can aspire."

When the second Round Table Conference failed, the Congress once more resolved to launch a Non-co-operation movement. Vallabhbhai was once more arrested and imprisoned. But this time Patel was fortunate enough to be locked up in the same room in which Gandhiji was imprisoned. For sixteen months they lived together in the same room and this close association greatly strengthened the tie of friendship between them. Of that close friendship formed during that jail-life, Gandhiji has said : "The affection with which he covered me recalls to me that of my own dear mother. I never knew him to possess motherly qualities." Patel's release was expedited by some nasal trouble ; he came out of jail in July, 1934.

When he came out of the prison he found the Congress split into different factions. There were the young socialists utterly disgusted with the policy of the Right. Pandit Malavya and Shri M. S. Aney had cut out a Nationalist Party on the issue of the Communal Award. There was severe criticism against Gandhi's non-violent policy. Even Patel had temporarily lost his faith in the Gandhian policy and he actually declared : "It is time for Gandhiji to retire." But Gandhiji still carried the majority with him and the Bombay Congress of 1934 reiterated their complete faith in Gandhiji's leadership.

In the year 1936 the question whether the Congress should accept office in the provinces and work Provincial Autonomy or not, again divided the Congress into two opposing camps. For a time the Congress wavered, unable to come to a decision on the matter. At last Gandhiji found out a solution ; the Congress would accept office if the provincial governors gave an assurance that they would not use their veto and interfere with the administration of the province by the ministers. The governors

gave the necessary guarantee and Congress decided to accept office. They captured a majority of the seats in seven provinces in the provincial elections. Vallabhbhai Patel was a member of the Congress Parliamentary Board and he carried a whirlwind country-wide campaign saying : "a vote for the Congress is a vote for Gandhi". The name of Gandhi, no doubt, produced the desired effect. The Congress swept the polls in seven provinces. Congress Ministries, for the most part, worked well in all the provinces. But there were occasional rubs here and there with the governors and the central government. One such clash occurred on the question of repatriating some political prisoners kept in the Andamans. The Congress pressed for their repatriation, but the Government stubbornly refused to comply with the wish of the Congress. The Ministries in U.P. and Bihar resigned and thereby forced the issue still further. Vallabhbhai growled in the Haripura Congress : "If we cannot release fifteen prisoners, then what is this so-called provincial autonomy?", and he threatened to take drastic action. Government sensed the danger and thought it wiser to release the prisoners and avert the danger.

While the Congress Ministries were in office, Patel was the man who controlled and directed the Ministries. In the words of P.R.R. Rao : "Patel alone was the Fuehrer of the Congress parliamentary regime, both *de jure* and *de facto*. He wielded immense power and directed, solo, the knotty administration of his immense jurisdiction. The Ministries danced to his tune and quaked at his name." With admirable determination and efficiency he pushed through Prohibition, Trade Dispute Acts, Tenancy Legislation and other such progressive measures inspite of formidable opposition from interested parties. In Bombay there was tremendous opposition against Prohibition. But Patel was bent upon introducing it. He withstood



all opposition and on August, 1, 1939, Bombay went completely dry.

Sardar Patel's heartless and unscrupulous nature in the face of opposition was fully revealed in his dealings with Dr. N. B. Khare and Mr. K. F. Nariman. The incidents, no doubt, proved the ruthless efficiency of the man but they tended to make him unpopular among a section of the public.

Nariman was a well known Congress leader of Bombay but he had some small quarrel with Vallabhbhai Patel and so when the Congress took office in Bombay, Nariman's claim for the Premiership was simply ignored and a dark horse, B. G. Kher was set up as the premier. Vallabhbhai used all his influence to bring this about. By virtue of his past services in the Congress, Nariman had a much greater claim to the Premiership than B. G. Kher. When Nariman complained, an enquiry was conducted with Gandhiji as one of the arbiters. The decision went against Nariman and he was "rusticated, school-boy fashion, demoted, pilloried and outlawed." Gandhiji's verdict, no doubt, proved Patel's innocence. But the belief still lingers in the minds of many people that some how Patel was responsible for Nariman's failure to get elected as Premier.

The Khare episode increased Patel's unpopularity. Dr. N. B. Khare was the Premier of C. P. He had frequent differences of opinion with some members of his Cabinet, especially with Ravisankar Sukla and Dwarka Prasad Misra. These two ministers gave him endless troubles and Khare wanted to get rid of them from his Cabinet. For this purpose he resigned hoping that the Ministers would follow suit. But his colleagues who saw through his game refused to oblige him. Congress was furious and Patel asked Khare for an explanation. On his failure to give a satisfactory answer, Khare was summarily dismissed.

These incidents created a big sensation not only in India but outside India also. The *News Review* reported thus : "Broom wielder Patel raised the dust even in the far away corridors of Whitehall's India Office. Wires buzzed with reports that he was sweeping along the way of Fascism". A large number of people in India denounced Patel as a Fascist, but Patel was sufficiently thick-skinned to weather these attacks.

When the war broke out in 1939, the Congress resigned their Ministries and demanded from Britain a declaration of their war aims. The British Government tried to pacify the Congress by making a half-hearted proposal which they sent to India through Sir Stafford Cripps. But neither the Congress nor the Muslim League could agree to that proposal. The Congress gave up hopes and passed the historic "Quit India" resolution on August 8, 1942, in Bombay. On that memorable day the Congress unequivocally declared that India could co-operate with Britain in the war only as an equal and not as a slave. Patel made a thunderous speech in the course of which he said : "If the Allies were thinking that they could fight their enemies from India without the co-operation of forty crores of her people they were grievously mistaken." That same night Patel was arrested along with the other Congress leaders. He was released only after the war in 1945.

Patel is the leader of the Rightist Congress. He is the Rightists' stick to beat the Leftists with. He has no patience with the young socialists. At the Haripura Congress he told them plainly, thus : "Let me make it clear that we have tolerated you for two years but we shall not tolerate you any more." To him these socialists are a great hindrance to the attainment of Swaraj, for he said once : "I will not tolerate their interference in Gujerat where I have dedicated my life to bring Swaraj".

Patel has his own opinions about Socialism. His Socialism is altogether of a different brand. In his own words: "True Socialism lies in the development of village industries. We do not want to reproduce in our country the chaotic conditions prevalent in the Western countries consequent upon mass production."

Patel's mind is empirical; he sees clearly things on the surface, but he seldom takes the trouble to think things out to their fundamentals. He is more interested in practical work. When Gandhi once decides upon a line of action, Vallabhbhai uses all his powers to carry it through. When Gandhi decided to boycott Council entry, Vallabhbhai fought with all his might for that view even against such fierce opponents as C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru and his own brother, Vithalbhai Patel. Later on when Gandhiji decided in favour of Council entry, Patel with equal enthusiasm took over charge of parliamentary work and guided the experiment in the seven provinces.

Vallabhbhai Patel is a man of extraordinarily strong nerves. John Gunther calls him a man of nerves made of filaments of ice. It would be equally true to say that his nerves are made of filaments of steel. Once, while he was arguing a case in the Court, a telegram was handed over to him. The telegram announced the death of his wife. Vallabhbhai read the telegram, folded it and put it in his pocket and calmly continued his argument as if nothing had happened. There was not the slightest change of expression on his face while reading the telegram or after it.

Though he is a staunch follower of Gandhiji, he differs from his leader in many respects. It was not Gandhiji's doctrine of non-violence that attracted Patel to him. It was Gandhiji's indomitable will and tremendous self-assurance that impressed him. Patel believes in non-violence only as a political expedient

and not as an ethical principle. He is not very religious ; it is said that, till recently, he had not read the Gita and other Hindu Scriptures.

Outside the sphere of politics he has few attainments. He is not a brilliant orator like Azad or Sarojini Naidu. But his speeches are impressive like those of Nehru, fired as they are by surging emotion. He is not much interested in international politics. It is said that he reads very few books. As a man of action his place is outside and not in the library.

Nevertheless, his services to the Congress have been both invaluable and indispensable. He has a distinct role to play in the Congress and today there is a widespread feeling among the people that there is a strong and uncompromising man who will effectively counteract the more lenient and compliant tendencies in the Congress. Faults he has ; but they are necessary faults —necessary to play his part. They are the faults that are usually found in all men of action. And in Patel these faults have been more than compensated by his vigorous virtues that have led to many of the tangible achievements of the Congress.

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Dr. Rajendra Prasad

## Dr. RAJENDRA PRASAD

(.B 1884—)

Among the luminaries that adorn the political firmament of India today Dr. Rajendra Prasad is undoubtedly one of the most conspicuous. By a long record of selfless service and sacrifice for the cause of the country he has secured for himself a permanent place in the hearts of all patriotic Indians. Ever since he joined the Congress as an active worker, his life has been one long and continuous story of suffering and sacrifice for the sake of the country's freedom. Gentle and unassuming by nature and passionately devoted to the task of liberating India, he lives a life of plain living and high thinking strictly in conformity with the Gandhian ideals of truth and ahimsa. No other Congress leader has shown such unswerving and scrupulous loyalty to these doctrines as Dr. Rajendra Prasad and this is perhaps the reason why he enjoys Gandhiji's confidence to a much greater extent than the other leaders. By identifying himself with the oppressed and starving people of Bihar, he has become their idol and a living embodiment of their hopes and aspirations. Since 1920, he has enjoyed the unique and enviable honour of being the number one man of Bihar.

Rajendra Prasad was born in December, 1884 in the Saran district of Bihar. Though he was born in a well-to-do family, he was brought up to lead a simple life. He himself is temperamentally averse to leading a luxurious life even when he has the means of commanding comforts and luxuries. Since there was no separate University in Bihar in those days, Rajendra Prasad got all his education from the Calcutta University. He had a brilliant educational career and distinguished himself on several

occasions by winning exceptional honours. He first attracted attention in 1893 when he scored the highest mark in the entrance examination to the Calcutta University. This created quite a sensation because till then no Biharee had passed that examination with that distinction. *The Hindustan Review* on that occasion wrote thus : "The young Rajendra is a brilliant student by all accounts. We hope he will live to occupy a seat on the Bench of the High Court of his province and receive the letter of appointment—as did Mr. Justice Chandavarkar at Lahore when presiding over a session of the Indian National Congress." Rajendra Prasad kept up this reputation throughout his academic career. Even so great a man as Gokhale was so impressed by Rajendra Prasad that he invited the latter to join the 'Servants Of India Society'. Gokhale certainly would not have made this request unless he saw such potential greatness in the young boy as to make him think that his services would be invaluable to the 'Servants Of India Society'. Rajendra Prasad was also anxious to join that society. But as his elder brother, who was his guardian at that time, did not favour the idea, Rajendra Prasad had to give up his idea of joining the 'Servants Of India Society'.

As a student, Rajendra Prasad took as much interest in external affairs as in his studies. He was not what successful students usually are—mere book-worms remaining in their small world of text-books, lessons and examinations, blissfully ignorant of and indifferent to what happens in the outer world. From very early in his life he began to take an interest in the activities of the Indian National Congress. In the Calcutta session of 1906 he enrolled himself as a volunteer and rendered valuable service in that capacity. Ever since 1912 he has been a member of the All-India Congress Committee and a member of the Congress Working Committee since 1922.



Side by side with his political activities, he carried on other activities also. In the college debates and discussions he always used to take a leading part. In the year 1902 he organised a "Bihari Club" which later in 1906 developed into the Bihar Students' Conference. Through that organ he protested against the Partition Movement which was one of the raging problems of that time.

He completed his M.A. in 1907 and took his degree in Law in 1910. In the interval, he worked as a school master in Muzaffarpur for one year.

He first started his legal practice in Calcutta. It did not take him long to become one of the foremost lawyers of the bar. After the partition, he migrated to Patna and started practice in the Patna High Court. There also he soon rose to the front ranks. Indeed he had such a roaring practice there that there was a talk of his being elevated to the Bench. But he was not destined to play that role; he was destined to play a far nobler and useful role than that of a stooge or servant of British imperialism in India. Unexpected currents of events came and carried him away from the law-court to other theatres where his presence was badly needed and where he was to enter upon a new career which has made him what he is today.

While he was thus firmly established in his legal career and the tempting prospect of becoming a judge of the Patna High Court was floating before his vision, events conspired to drag him away from that career and put him on an entirely new path which has moulded his whole subsequent life in an unexpected fashion. At that time, the condition of the ryots (cultivators) in many parts of Bihar and especially the condition of the ryots employed in indigo cultivation in the Champaran District was very deplorable. They were oppressed and ill treated by their landlords in all possible ways. The

conditions of their service were highly unfair and unfavourable to them. They had to work long hours and got only very meagre wages in return. By a system known as the "tinkathia" system, every tenant was legally obliged to cultivate indigo in three "kathas" of every acre of his landlord's land. When the attention of Gandhiji was drawn to these facts, he came down to Bihar to satisfy himself that the reports were true and to do what he could to ameliorate the condition of the poor peasants. Rajendra Prasad himself was painfully aware of the pitiable condition of the ryots. But as in the case of most of the other leaders the spark in them required to be kindled into fire by some external agency ; the inspiration and the lead had to come from outside. And the required inspiration and lead came from the greatest inspirer and leader—Gandhiji. The mere presence of the Mahatma was enough. Rajendraprasad threw his lucrative practice to the winds and became Gandhiji's chief lieutenant in the task of emancipating the ryots of Champaran.

The two now set out to make a minute study of the grievances of the workers. Only then did Gandhiji realise the real magnitude of the work he had undertaken to do and how indispensable Rajendraprasad's assistance to him was. He said : "I had thought that I should be able to leave here in two days ; but now I realise that the work might take even two years. I am prepared to give that time, if necessary. I am now feeling my ground, but I want your help. We cannot sit still until we have driven 'tinkathia' out of Bihar." Together they collected about seven thousand statements from the peasants to support the alleged grievances. Meanwhile the Government tried to thwart the attempts of Gandhiji, but finding that popular sympathy and feelings were strongly in favour of him, agreed to appoint a committee to enquire into the case. Gandhiji was made a

member of this committee. The committee ratified the findings of Gandhiji and Rajendraprasad. Thus the result was a complete success for them. The Government was compelled to pass an Act called the Champaran Agrarian Act of 1918 which gave substantial relief to the peasants.

Thus started the real political career of Rajendraprasad. It was his good fortune to be associated so closely with the Mahatma from the very beginning of his political career. He became a trusted liegeman of Gandhiji, which status he has maintained till the present day.

In the year 1920, the A.I.C.C. passed the resolution of Non-co-operation or Satyagraha. It was at this time that Rajendraprasad finally gave up his practice and decided to devote his whole time for the national cause. He was the leader of the Satyagraha movement in Bihar. All the schools, colleges and Government offices were boycotted. Most of the schools and colleges were closed and it became the responsibility of the Congress to educate the unemployed students. So Rajendra Prasad organised a National University—The Bihar Vidyapith and several schools and colleges were opened and affiliated to this University. Rajendra Prasad was the vice-chancellor of this University. Under his able management the University progressed till it was declared illegal by the Government in the early thirties.

Rajendra Prasad has complete faith in the efficacy of the weapon of Satyagraha. He has repeatedly said that the only way of attaining Swaraj is through non-violent Satyagraha. The following words uttered by him show his absolute faith in the potency of Satyagraha : "It is we who are perpetuating British rule in India. Had Indians non-co-operated for a single day, British Imperialism would have by now collapsed. Let us withdraw all support to the British and the administration will

come to a stand-still. If the collaboration of Indians ceases today, you will at once find British rule evaporating into thin air. Let those who help the British withdraw themselves and imperialism will be liquidated. Let all the slaves agree not to carry the alien burden and the load of injustice any further and you get your freedom."

It was in the year 1934 that Rajendra Prasad's fame and popularity rose to their zenith. In that year there occurred in Bihar one of the most devastating earthquakes known to history. The destruction of life and property was so enormous that it required vast quantities of men, money and material and exceptional organisational talents to give immediate relief to the needy and rehabilitate the affected areas. For the yeomen service that Rajendra Prasad rendered on this occasion, the people of Bihar will always be grateful and indebted to him. On the day of the earthquake Rajendra Prasad was in prison, undergoing a long term of imprisonment. Fortunately for Bihar, he was released two days after the earthquake. Protracted jail-life and chronic asthma had broken down his health. Indeed it was on the recommendation of doctors that he was released from the prison. Disregarding the warning of the doctors, this invalid immediately applied himself to the relief of the stricken people. He immediately formed a non-official organisation called the Bihar Central Relief Committee to raise funds and to organise and distribute relief. Several sub-committees were established in different districts. He was the chairman of the Bihar Central Relief Committee. He made an appeal to the public for help. It is a tribute to his popularity and influence that help in the form of men, money and materials poured in generously from all quarters. Within a short time the 'Rajendra Prasad Fund' amounted to 28 lakhs of rupees. Relief organisations set up in different parts

of the province. Food, clothes, blankets and medicine were given free of charge to the poor. Cheap grain shops were opened and hospitals established in several parts of the province.

The Government had started a parallel fund called the Viceroy's Fund. Even though the Government had the support of the princes and the rich landlords of the country, the Viceroy's fund did not exceed the Rajendra Prasad Fund by any appreciable amount. The work turned out by the Bihar Central Relief Committee is conclusive evidence of the wide popularity and high organising capacity of Rajendraprasad and elicited praise and thanks from all parts of India.

Since 1920, Rajendra Prasad has been very intimately connected with the Congress. He has been a member of the All-India Congress Committee since 1912 and a member of the Congress Working Committee since 1922. He has gone to the jail several times on account of his activities in the Congress. He has also served the Congress in different capacities as general secretary of the Congress, as secretary of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee and also as its president. He was president of the Congress twice. He had the privilege of presiding over the Golden Jubilee of the Indian National Congress in the year 1935. In the year 1939 Shri Subhas Chandra Bose was elected as the president of the Congress. Soon after his election, however, 12 members of the Working Committee simultaneously resigned. Later on, compelled by circumstances, Subhas Chandra Bose had to resign. He resigned and Rajendra Prasad was appointed as his successor. Thus Rajendra Prasad became the president for the second time in 1939.

In the year 1942 when the Congress passed the "Quit India" resolution, Rajendra Prasad was arrested and imprisoned

along with the other Congress leaders. He was released only after the war in 1945. \* \*

Rajendra Prasad has always taken a keen and active interest in the education of the people. He himself was a teacher for about a year in Muzaffarpur. Later in 1914 he became a professor in the University Law College, Calcutta and held that post till 1916. He was a member of the Senate of the Patna University for a long time till he resigned that post just before starting the Satyagraha movement. When the Non-cooperation movement started he established the Bihar Vidyapith and acted as its Vice-chancellor. As a member of the Senate of the Patna University he used his influence to the utmost to make education cheaper for the masses and to make Hindi and other provincial dialects the medium for instruction.

He has a strong scholarly bend. He knows seven languages including Persian and Urdu. He is known to be a good pundit in the Hindi language. Twice he was requested to preside over the All-India Sahitya Sabha (All-India Literary Conference) once in 1928 and later in 1936. He is also interested in historical research and in the work of the Bharatiya Itihas Parishad (Indian Academy of History) of which he was the Rector.

He shuns the lime-light and has always preferred to be a silent worker in the background. He has always cared more for the welfare of the people than for his own fame or popularity. He has summed up his aims in these words : "I want my people to be all literate, healthy and working for common prosperity. We want that freedom, where without fears, everyone can have full civil liberty. We want to build a new and great India where poverty and prejudice, untimely death and destitution would be forgotten stories." He is a perfect example of those rare persons who, while prepared to sacrifice their all for the

sake of humanity, are yet totally indifferent to the rewards of their labours either in the form of material gains or public recognition. He never wanted fame or power; they came to him unsought due to his merit.

On the question of Pakistan his views are the same as those of the Congress and the other prominent leaders of India. "Pakistan", he said "is something of 'Delhi ka Laddu', a mysterious product without shape, form and content. The cry of Pakistan is a huge fraud perpetrated on the ignorant and innocent Muslim masses and is the latest device to perpetuate the machinery of exploitation of the poor in the name of religion. It is extremely foolish to think in terms of communalism when the reason and wisdom of man are trying to release the universal brotherhood of man". On another occasion he said: "It is a crime to think and act in parochial, provincial or religious bearing. This division between brother and brother is anti-national and suicidal. Hindus and Muslims have to live as brethren in India under Swaraj. Our Swaraj will be guided by the thinking and design not of a few but of all, where the proletariat will dictate irrespective of caste, creed or colour. In the Swaraj of the Congress every common man will have his say in all matters."

Like all true scholars, he does not like to travel. He likes to remain at home and devote his leisure for scholastic pursuits. Once in 1928, however, he had to go to England in connection with an appeal preferred to the Privy Council from Burma. He took this opportunity to tour through the Continent and visit all the capital cities. Wherever he went he was gladly welcomed and highly honoured. In Austria, while he was addressing a meeting of pacifists, he was assaulted and injured by some anti-pacifists. It took some weeks for him to recover from the injuries.

A firm adherent of the doctrine of non-violence, he practises 'Ahimsa' not only in deeds, but even in thoughts and words. He never loses his temper nor allows himself to be carried away by his emotions. He has trained himself to keep calm and cool in the face of trouble or opposition. In the words of Ela Sen : "There is an unobtrusive and quiet efficiency about his actions which is characteristic of Rajendra Prasad. Spectacular action does not belong to him. He is of that group of steady and sure workers who are the heart and soul of any movement."

He has got a peculiar knack of keeping aside his prejudices and checking his mental bias and looking at any problem in an impartial and objective way. This enables him to see the opponents' point of view. "There is a moral generosity about the man that lifts him above all party politics and sectarian views and he is capable of appreciating the intrinsic qualities of his enemy. The courage of his convictions endows him with a respect for those of others. His mental horizon has not become overshadowed by the gloom of party-spirit nor has he lost his clarity of vision in over-emphasising his own particular creed."

Rajendra Prasad has always been of poor health. Chronic asthma has shattered his health. Long periods of prison life have further weakened his body. Poor health has always handicapped him in his activities. But his delicate health has never damped his enthusiasm. Whenever he came out of prison his cry was "Let our slogan be 'back to satyagraha', for that alone will bring India to her destined goal".

The characteristic qualities of Rajendraprasad that have endeared him to the people and given him his peculiar charm are his utter simplicity, his disarming frankness and modesty, his purity and sincerity of motive, his unassuming and unobtrusive nature and his capacity for disinterested service.



People have sometimes accused him of being unduly loyal to and influenced by his party and of acting against his convictions in deference to his party. But people have mistaken him. Whenever he had any difference of opinion on any matter he has expressed his disagreement fearless. But whenever the majority held a different view he has modestly refrained from emphasising his own view too much. He has, in such cases, allowed the majority view to prevail and himself acted in accordance with that view. This is not the result of intellectual dishonesty. It is the result of his sense of duty and discipline and a desire to keep up the honour of the party.

In many respects he resembles the Mahatma. In his simplicity of life, his firm faith in non-violence and in his capacity for sacrifice he is second only to Gandhiji. Many of the other Congress leaders believe in non-violence more as a political expedient than as a moral principle. As official spokesman of the Congress, pledged to follow a policy of non-violence, they have to refrain from openly advocating violence. But on occasions they have shown in their speeches and private talks tendencies towards violence which have thrown suspicion on the genuineness of their belief. But to Rajendra Prasad non-violence is not a mere convenient expedient to be adopted as long as it is useful and to be rejected the moment it ceases to be so. To him the theory of non-violence is as much true as the other accepted moral doctrines.

By his heroic and valuable achievements he has made himself immortal. Among the worthy sons of India there will always be a prominent place reserved for him. Long after his death posterity will continue to cherish his memory as one of the most ardent patriots of India who lived and died for the upliftment of this country and her people.

## **EMINENT INDIANS**

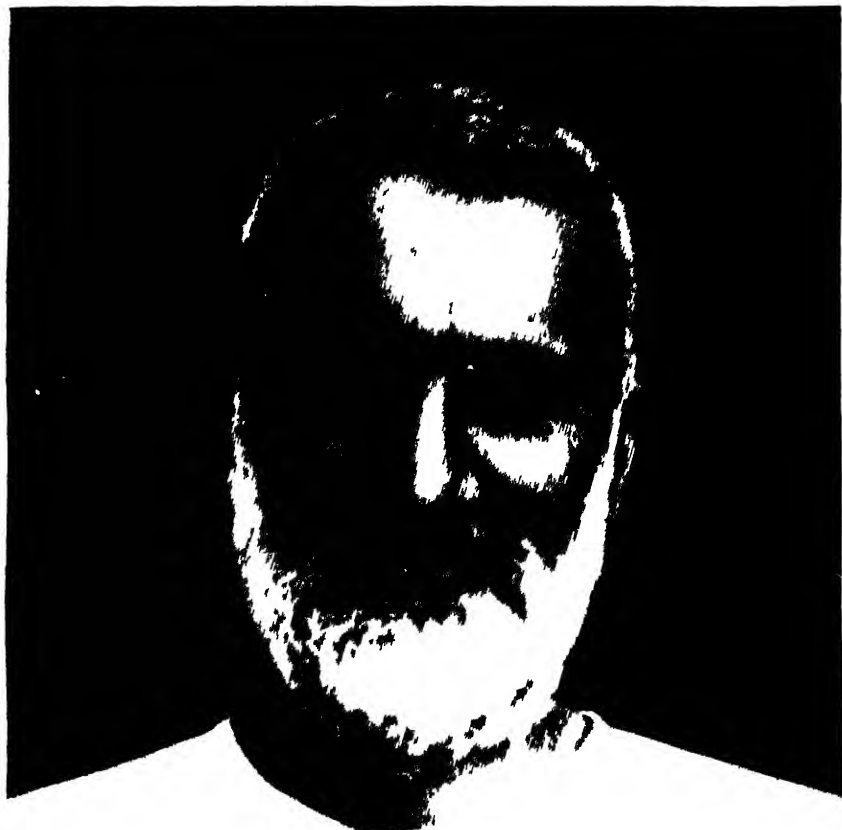
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Khan Abdul Gaffur Khan

## KHAN ABDUL GAFFAR KHAN

( B. 1891— )

The very name of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan awakes in our mind the sombre but serene picture of a tall and bearded Pathan—six feet and three inches high with a saintly look in his eyes and a divine smile on his lips—clad in extreme simplicity—steadfastly moving towards his goal—the complete independence of India—as a brave and dauntless soldier of non-violence. Though he is known throughout the length and breadth of India as the 'Frontier Gandhi,' he would not accept the title out of his characteristic humility, as he thinks his small name should not be associated with the great name of his 'Guru'—Mahatma Gandhi. Born in affluence and bred in luxury he has developed such an ascetic simplicity in life that he has even given up drinking tea which he liked so much : and such is his saintly modesty that twice he refused to accept the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress offered him on the ground that he is not fit for that exalted position.

The appearance of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan revives in me the first sight I had of him in Calcutta on a fine sunny morning in December, 1945. When after a time of eager expectation I saw my hero coming out from the President's house, I was charmed to look at him. He swiftly got inside a car standing by and I jostled through the crowd to have a 'darshan' of the reputed leader and to get his autograph if possible. He was seated with his arms clasped over his legs and was looking ahead as if unconscious of us. His eyes were serious, but his lips were smiling ; his eyes were soft, his nose pointed and long,

and his hair cut to the root. But in all, his bearded face bore a serenity and sweetness that one misses in so many other politicians of India, with the solitary exception of Mahatmaji. If Gandhiji's is a child's smile, Abdul Gaffar Khan's reminds us of the sweet smile of a loving grandfather. And when I thrust my hands inside the car for his signature he calmly said "Do some work ; taking of autograph is no work". That simple sentence revealed to me the innermost depths of his character that he is prominently a great worker—a worker from head to hill, and will not rest content till India has attained her freedom.

The mystery that has made this great soldier from the Frontier so much loved and revered in every corner of India lies in the fact that he, of all persons, has been able to revolutionise the mental outlook of the Pathans and turn them as non-violent fighters for the country's freedom.

The Pathans had throughout their long and eventful history lived in violence and robbery with a great military tradition to beckon them. Blood and warfare was all they understood—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth was all that they believed in. Hence it was no easy matter, if not an impossible task to make these lions believe in the Gandhian doctrine of non-violence and act up to it. But nothing was impossible to the great Pathan, the hero of our biography Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. By dint of sheer hard labour, untiring patience and undaunted sacrifice, he had been able to convert the sturdy and turbulent Pathans into meek but courageous soldiers of non-violence. It was possible only because non-violence was with him, not merely a matter of policy but an essential article of his faith—a breath of Gaffar Khan's life. Jawaharlal is really serious

when he remarked that "it was really surprising how this Pathan accepted the idea of non-violence far more so in theory than many of us". And indeed the life-story of Gaffar Khan is the gradual growth and final realisation of this great principle in the arena of Indian political life.

Khan Abdul Gaffar was born in 1891 at the village of Utmanzai in Peshwar. Khan the first word of his name signifies that his family was the leader of a clan, and naturally very rich. His grandfather had fought on the side of the British in the Sepoy Mutiny and his father, Behran Khan, chief of the Utmanzai village was a loyal subject of the Crown. It is quite natural then that from his boyhood days, Abdul Gaffar dreamed of joining the army and in view of his exceptionally strong physique the only ambition of his youth was to become a big army officer in India.

But this was not to be. While he was a student reading his Entrance Standard at Aligarh, two external incidents changed his vision of life completely. The first was the nationalistic writings of Moulana Abul Kalam Azad through his paper 'Al Hilal' where he was calling his community to the greater call of the country, leaving aside the narrow communalism of the Muslim Leagues. 'Al Hilal' was as if an "open sesame" to his career and Abdul Gaffar, deeply impressed with Azad's writings was aglow with enthusiasm. Fortunately, however, another incident took place at that time which cured him of his love for the Army. He witnessed the ill-treatment meted out to one of his relatives, already holding a high military post in India by an English officer, and this simple incident opened his eyes to the racial discrimination and class distinction practised by the Europeans in their dealings with the Indian colleagues. So when he was offered Indian Commission at the tender age of eighteen, he had no hesitation

in refusing it point blank. Thus Abdul Gaffar's future career was settled and he turned his entire attention to public service and national regeneration in the country.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan had realised the value of national education in the country and hence built up a network of national schools throughout his province—schools, where children were taught not merely how to pass examinations, but to be brave fighters for country's freedom. Naturally however, the Government could not view these institutions with equanimity and suppressed each of them ruthlessly during the first Great War. The infamous Rowlatt Act again raised a storm of protest throughout the country and brought Abdul Gaffar Khan in action against the British Government. He started great agitation against the Bill, delivering fiery speeches and organising meetings throughout the province which was attended by thousands of people. The Government was thoroughly upset to find this highly important province—important from the strategic and military point of view—slipping off its hand and passing to the opposite camp. Hence the authorities made no delay in taking stern action against the agitators and this jail bird tasted gaol for the first time in his life.

It is indeed very strange that though by this time Gaffar Khan had sufficiently imbibed the Gandhian spirit of non-violence and passive resistance he had never tried, out of his natural shyness to come into personal contact with Mahatma Gandhi his great 'master'. For he was from his boyhood a silent worker, abhorring publicity and fame. He always preferred to roam in 'terra incognita' and disliked to come in the limelight.\* So it was as late as 1928 that he met Mahatma Gandhi for the first time in his life at Lucknow and later joined the Lahore Congress in 1929.



The Lahore Congress was a memorable landmark in Abdul Gaffar Khan's life as it first gave him an idea of his organisation of the Khudai Khidmatgars. It was there that he was impressed by the activities of the volunteers of the meeting and returned to his province with a firm resolve to establish a volunteer corps on his model, open to all communities. Soon the whole of the province was covered, by branches of these volunteer corps who later came to be known as "Khudai Khidmatgars", or the 'Servants of God'. The volunteers who were to wear khaddar, were wedded to the principle of non-violence and the main objects before them were three in number communal amity, social uplift and political freedom of the country. The colour of their shirts was red not because of any political conviction but simply owing to the fact that brick dust provided the cheapest local dye and this colour prevented the shirts from being easily dusty;—although the British Government exploited this scarlet colour of the dress and termed them as "Red shirts" as if they have any illicit connection with the revolutionary communists of Russia. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan by dint of his great organising ability, soon established numerous centres of the 'Red shirts' throughout the province. The 'Civil disobedience' movement was in the meantime started by Gandhiji by the violation of Salt laws in 1930 and the whole Frontier Province lined behind Gaffar Khan like a solid rock.

The main activities of the 'Khudai Khidmatgars' were picketing of foreign liquors and cloth. Thousands of Pathans offered Satyagraha without showing the least signs of violence. The Government grew nervous and an era of the severest repression set on. Jails were filled to capacity but still there remained thousands outside them, ready to get into jails. The Pathans were insulted, ill-treated, caned and beaten

but still they did not raise their little finger in revolt. One Pathan is reported to have said: "I can finish you in a second but you are spared because our leader has ordered us to remain non-violent, even in face of provocations." Later on, the houses were burnt and their villages were in a state of seige for weeks together and yet the Government could not point out a single instance when the volunteers resorted to retaliatory measures. Indeed the self-discipline and the fortitude that the Pathans displayed in the Civil disobedience movement was really amazing and exemplary. But the climax was yet to come. On a single day in April, 1930, more than a thousand of unarmed and harmless Pathans—men and women—were brutally killed. Events went to such an extreme that even the Garwali Regiments, who were ordered to shoot, categorically refused to do so. The whole of India was startled to hear the news of this Pathan shooting—indeed a Jallianwalahbag massacre in miniature. Sir Normal Botton, the Governor of the Province resigned, but the report of the Peshwar Enquiry Committee, presided over by the late Mr. Vithalbhai Patel, the first President of the Indian Legislative Assembly never saw the light of the day as it was proscribed by the government. The whole of India turned their gaze on this province and became conscious of the great figure and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan emerged in their eyes as the leader of the Frontier-‘Frontier Ganhi.’

After the completion of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact the Khan brothers were set at liberty but were again arrested after the failure of the Second Round Table Conference, under the Frontier Regulations on the ground of planning an armed revolt against the British Government in league with Haji of Tarangzai, who was waging an open war with the Government. But the plea was baseless and absurd for Abdul Gaffur Khan was

always an ardent champion of non-violence and could never follow the violent and revolutionary methods of the Haji. The only occasion when the great leader worked in collaboration with the Haji was at the time when he was establishing National Schools all over the province.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan is a person of uncommon courage and fortitude. The greatest bereavement or the rudest shock cannot prevent him from his mission and he will not budge an inch from his ideal in any circumstances. An anecdote connected with his life states that while he was in prison he heard the news of hunger-strike resorted to by one of his nephews in the same gaol. His condition grew extremely grave after his fasting for 78 days, but Abdul Gaffar Khan did neither meet him nor desist him from his fasts; nor did he beg the Government of his release, but simply requested the Government to make an adequate disposal of the body after his death. This simple incident is an eloquent tribute to his superhuman fortitude and firmness of conviction.

The 'Frontier Gandhi' is one of the staunchest followers and devoted lieutenants of Mahatma Gandhi. He is well versed both in the Hindu and in the Muslim Scriptures and held classes on the Gita and the Koran while he was detained within prison. These holy books assured him that non-violence as a creed is not only a mere theory divorced from the material world but it can be translated into practice in the political life of the country. It was on the issue of non-violence, that he resigned in February 1942, from his membership of the Congress Working Committee following the resignation of his 'guru' Mahatma Gandhi from it. One reads with great pleasure only recently that Abdul Gaffar Khan, the great hero of the Frontier has again consented to be a member of the Congress Working Committee at the request of the leaders.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan is a lifelong sufferer for country's cause. During his first imprisonment he was bound in fetters, too small for him, to cause him extreme pain and agony. And just before his last imprisonment in August 1942 while he was offering Satyagraha in the hilly and rugged plains of Peshwar, his ribs were broken in a lathi charge, and inside the gaol, his health showed considerable signs of decay. But when he was released by his brother Khan Sahib, a great Congress leader of the Province, who was again made the Premier of the Frontier in 1945 his health was shattered but his spirit was doubly indomitable and his great courage and iron will showed no signs of abatement. And he still remains as one of the most 'feared' men of the Government in India.

Though supremely religious Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan believes in religious toleration and equanimity of the Soul. He hates the communal organisations because they accentuate differences between the two principal communities of India—Hindus and Muslims. On the contrary he believes that Hindus and Muslims will live amicably in India when there will be no third party to divide them and to fan the communal tension. A single incident of his life proves how sincerely he despises the arrangements that keep the two communities apart. On his way back to the Frontier from Calcutta he could not be persuaded to take tea at the Railway Station at Benares, for he explained that the system of separate arrangements like the Hindu and the Muslim Refreshment Stalls made him so much ashamed that he could not take his tea there. He stands for complete amity and union, not only between the Hindus and the Muslims but between all the communities of India. Naturally the communal organisations do not look at him with much favour. But such is his towering personality and sweetness of character that even his enemies could not but

respect and revere his sincerity. As an instance may be mentioned on the occasion when he was in gaol and the League Ministry was in power in the province and Khan Samen Jan, Khan, one of the Muslim League Ministers announced through the newspapers that "he does not lag behind any body in showing respect to the Frontier Gandhi, and he would do everything in his power for the proper treatment of the great leader."

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan is one of the strongest politicians of modern India. He has given to Congress huge Muslim mass support and it was due to his supreme personality that while other Muslim provinces are groaning under the clutches of communal organisations, the North Western Frontier Province is assured of Congress Ministry in 1937, as well as in 1946.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan is a great social reformer. He is all for abolition of Pardah system in India; though however opposed to an unequivocal liberty given to women. He is proud of the rising womanhood of India and particularly so of the part that Pathan women had played in the struggle for India's independence. Incidentally it may be mentioned that all his female relatives including his sisters and his daughters-in-law have always followed him to the gaol.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan lives almost an ascetic life for he thinks that his simplicity could bring him nearer to the masses. While travelling in trains he always uses the third class as a principle. In the recent Working Committee meeting held in Calcutta he travelled from Peshwar to Calcutta in third class and decided to go back in motor car for he thought that this would help him in coming into close contact with the masses of the different provinces of India. His ancestral fortunes are huge enough to allow him to fly from Peshwar to Calcutta but this he would not do, as his life is patterned after the great spirit of India—Mahatma Gandhi.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan is indeed a great orator but he speaks seldom in public. There is no rhetoric brilliance or poetic flavour in his speeches. But when he speaks, his words come straight from his heart in a lucid and simple language and never fail to produce their effect on the audience.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan is a perfect picture of humility, modesty, and gentleness—the like of which is rarely to be met with in the political horizon of India. It is indeed a pity that so little is known about such a great and interesting personality. One may wish, he had written an autobiography but that he won't do, for that would mean self-advertisement. He is content to be a mere four-anna member of the Congress, without coveting any office. "Pray don't make a leader of me—I am a mere worker", declared he recently in Calcutta. Such a personification of modesty is indeed astonishing; and this has made his character all the more lovable not only with the masses but also with the top leaders of the country.

With his life-long toil and sacrifice, his ascetic flavour and reformist zeal, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan will be long remembered by posterity as one of the forefathers of Indian Nationalism that great centripetal force, which can carry India over the barriers of race, language and religion to the promised land of salvation and glory. Roaming through the mud and dust of the Frontier plains, associating intimately with the millions of poor peasants, sharing in their woes and sufferings and striving throughout his life to lift them out of the plough of political subjection, economic oppression and religious bigotry the great Pathan has exhibited a type of leadership which India needs today.

Such is the lion of the Frontier.

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## BINAYÁK DAMODAR SAVARKAR

( B. 1883 )

“There is no arguing with Johnson, for, if his pistol misses fire he knocks you down with the butt-end of it”—this conclusive remark of Goldsmith flashes in the mind when one takes into consideration the terrible and appealing career of Shri Binayak Damodar Savarkar. The small weak man, with eyes glaring in emotion,—one can overlook him unknowingly. There is nothing extraordinary on the surface. From a distance he could easily be taken as an ordinary helter-skeltering fellow, destined to die unknown, or to be lost in the multitude. But the case is not so with this queer genius Savarkar, who kept for a pretty long time the whole machinery of the British Intelligence Department on the alert. For whom frequent traps, by these men, were constantly put into action. They thought of tightening their grip on this desperate rebel who had been infuriating the Indians with the idea of bloody revolution to sweep away the British from India. They thought in vain and tried in vain. For a considerable time they could not legally catch this youngman, who was behind a number of terrorist activities in India and England. They had to wait and see for a successful round up. The whites in India and England had to bear patiently the fire and brimstone of Savarkar's orations.

Binayak Rao Damodar Savarkar was born in 1883. He belongs to the Citapaban Brahmin family of Maharashtra. His father Damodar had three sons,—Ganesh Rao, Binayak Rao and Narayan Rao. Born in the land of Shivaji, and

in the family where patriotism captivated the young mind, Binayak would listen to the sweet recitations of 'Tukaram' or 'Bhamar Moropant' by his father and began to feel the fire of patriotism and the charm of muse in his teens.

He took up pen and before he reached twelve, his poems saw the light of day. They were accepted by some widely-read magazines of Maharashtra and the boy was in the threshold of eminence as a poet. But his spirit was not made of that effeminate emotional stuff of ordinary poets who thought only of Beauty and Romance in their literary outputs. The young brain was already full of 'Mahabharata', the ideal of Shivaji and the glorious history of Maharastra. So when he began to write, his "Pro-patria-mori"-creed got upperhand.

His patriotism took a dangerous turn. The terrorist underworld put Chapekar brothers to do away with a white miscreant, who was brutally killed. The Chapekar Brothers were arrested and hung, and Natu brothers were transported. Ranade took vengeance on the traitors of the Terrorist party by taking their lives and was arrested and sentenced to death. These swift kaleidoscopic changes in Indian affairs had a profound effect on Savarkar. Still in his teens, Savarkar was stirred into action by this soul-stirring drama of Indian terrorism. "Chapekar Brothers" were murderers no doubt, but they were murderers for a great cause. They laid down their lives for the cause of the country. Bright examples of "Pro-patria-mori"—creed.

He took up pen to immortalise his heroes. Moreover, he organised "Mitra-Mela" or Friends' Union, which would be a rendezvous of friends like him. Ostensibly this 'friends' union' would be non-violent, but really it meant to follow in the footsteps of Chapekar brothers. Savarkar believed that violence and blood-shed would be the surest short-cut to liberation.



On passing the Entrance examination in 1901 Binayak went to Poona, and got himself admitted in "Fergusson College". Soon he became the popular student leader of his day, and filled quite a number of young brains with his passionate speeches and 'bloody thoughts'. Soon after, the infamous "Partition of Bengal" aroused all over India, an insuperable aversion for British rule. 'Swadeshi' and boycott were organised. Burning of foreign, especially British goods were in vogue for a considerable time. Fiery speeches could be heard everywhere. This condition of Bengal put Savarkar to the lime-light. He organised Swadeshi movements, and the burning of British goods, and went on delivering eloquent speeches that smacked of his inveterate dislike for British rule.

As a leader he was greeted by the public. The Anglo Indian community and the European bloc thought in bitter terms of him. The college authorities could neither displease the Europeans nor incur the displeasure of the countrymen. Yet they had to strike his name off the college register to the annoyance of the Indian press. However, the University of Bombay allowed him to sit for the ensuing B. A. Examination, and Savarkar passed the examination with distinction.

After passing the B. A. examination Savarkar went on organising parties for the liberation of India. His emotional outbursts in verse were got by heart by men and women of Maharashtra. His "Simhagar" and "Baji Deshpande" were sung at every corner of Maharashtra. Indian Police could not remain idle. His songs were proscribed. But if proscription meant prohibition, it was a sad failure. His songs though proscribed were sung and heard by every-body and the police looked like a pigmy to the "hydra-headed" monster mob.

Binayak was not satisfied with what he had achieved

already. He began to think of sailing for England and to bring there the news of the sufferance and discontent of the Indians. He got a chance. Pundit-Krishna-Burma-Scholarship was awarded to him for legal studies in England. He accepted it, and before leaving India, he made it clear to his followers that he would represent India to Europe, and manage to learn manufacturing of explosives by mixing with fellow-terrorists of the world.

In the year 1906 he left for England. But before leaving India, he set up a centre of "New India Society" at Bombay and published a weekly magazine "Bihari" as the party-organ.

After reaching the shores of England he began to follow his plan in right earnest. He established a "Free-India-Society" in England, and began to use his tongue freely for his bloody "Pro-patria-mori"—creed. The "Home-Rule" movement conducted by Shri Shyamji Krishna Burma in England underwent temporary eclipse, and the Indians along with the veteran pacifist nationalists like Shri Burma, accepted his theory of organising violence to sweep away British Imperialism from Indian soil. Indian students from Cambridge, Oxford, Edinburgh and Manchester followed in his foot-steps, and Savarkar was completely successful in making England the spring-board for terrorist activities in different parts of India. The students were initiated by a Russian Terrorist in the art of preparing bombs and explosives. They poured in their experiences of this job in black and white. These were sent to India, along with the formula, undetected, and India became a hot bed for British Imperialism. In India, here and there, parties sprang up to carry out the instructions of the magnificent rebel Savarkar and hand-made bombs and bomb-made-casualties kept the police and the ambulance busy. Behind every thing

had been working the invisible hand of Savarkar, who, then, was busy in preparing books that would inflame young mind with fantastically bloody thoughts.

The first book was a translation of Mazzini's works into Maharastri. The book became intensely popular as soon as it saw the light of day, and stirred the popular enthusiasm to such a mad frenzy that the Government of India had to proscribe it.

The second book, "The War of Independence" was a monumental work on the Sepoy Mutiny. Even in England critics were moved by the matchless brilliance and profound erudition of the author. But before it was completed and ready for sale, the Government banned the book. This singular move to ban a book, which had not yet seen the light of day, made even the staunchest supporters of British high-handedness bit uneasy.

Meanwhile Scotland Yard was not idle. It could scent danger in the air. The busy Indian students were constantly shadowed. Savarkar was ruthlessly attacked by the leading papers of England, and constantly watched by secret agents. That the party had already established centres in France and Germany was quite obvious, and that this 'plan' was behind every rat-trap was crystal clear. Moreover Manicktola bomb case and conspiracy to shoot the whites and the "black sheep" Indian, had made it quite clear that more dangerous and more frightening actions of the terrorists were afoot. So something must be done immediately to paralyse the brain of this organisation.

Savarkar was not such a fool as not to be able to anticipate the inevitable move of the Scotland Yard, and with extreme ingenuity and caution he carried on. Despite constant vigil Savarkar produced booklets to inflame the Sikh community and managed to send these booklets to India, under the very nose of Scotland Yard. Savarkar believed that if such a martial

race as the Sikhs could be induced to fight against the British, the battle of independence was half won.

Scotland Yard could not stop Savarkar from action, neither they could catch hold of him as a criminal, and the whites had to remain satisfied with arresting his elder brother Ganesh Rao, who was found with explosives and certain other questionable things in India. He was transported for life. Binayak was to remain outside India. This pious wish of the Government of India was communicated to Binayak in England, who in the meantime had become barrister and was going to join the bar. The British Government did neither permit him to join the Bar, nor refuse him with a big 'no'. Binayak had to wait and see.

Mr. Dhingra, a follower of Savarkar and an ex-member of 'India House' and 'Free India League' shot Sir Curzon Wylie dead, and was immediately arrested. England-wide murmur for this violent disloyalty was heard that day. Even Indian nationalists like Surendranath and Bepin Pal could not but feel disgusted at the ghastly operation of that dash youngman and openly criticised the "cowardly conduct of this pseudo-nationalist" in a meeting in London. Savarkar raised his solitary voice amidst the deprecations by these super-orators and received a mighty blow on the face from an Anglo-Indian. His comrades who were with him in that meeting could not remain passive and that Anglo-Indian busy body was knocked down unconscious. Savarkar was arrested, but he got off free, by proving that he was not wrong in raising his voice for Mr. Dhingra, who still was under trial. That Mr. Dhingra had murdered Sir Curzon was not yet proved, and no body had any right to deprecate a man under trial. But very soon Mr. Dhingra was found guilty and sentenced to death.

The death of Dhingra upset some of the plans of Savarkar. Indians in England were put into a tight corner. His organisation was not faring well. Savarkar was homeless. His younger brother, who was then only seventeen years old, was imprisoned in India. The Secret-service men were making his very existence impossible. Nobody in England would give him food and shelter and the young rebel was being chased from hotel to hotel. London was becoming more and more inhospitable to him. Savarkar left for Brighton for an indefinite period. Worries and anxieties were telling heavily on him. His health was breaking down. He went to Wales and under the supervision of an Indian doctor he got a bed in a sanatorium. In India, a sympathiser of Ganesh Rao shot a magistrate dead—this news maddened the English and Indian papers to a considerable extent. Popular opinion was going against Savarkar and anyway he would be arrested by the police. It was only a question of days, and he could feel the inevitability of prison-hospitality. His friends advised him to go over to France and to organise terrorist parties there. They made it perfectly clear to Savarkar that if he remained any longer in England it would neither help him nor his party in any way. The business would be closed and he would be arrested.

This save-skin-policy was not fascinating to Savarkar. Yet he had to comply with their request, as it was the only thing open to him. He went to France not to save himself but to save the party from the tentacles of the Scotland-Yard-octopus. The revolutionary parties in France accorded heartiest welcome to him. Shri Shamji Krishna Burma who was then in France did everything possible for his welfare and comfort. But France could not keep him for a long time. Maharashtra of Shivaji was calling him. His home, the sad misfortunes connected with it was calling him. Moreover

India needed a strong hand like his. He was suffering from nostalgia.

But he could not go back to India. With a heavy heart he went back to England and was arrested. Perhaps it was becoming psychologically impossible for him to bear the strain any longer. His family was ruined, quite a number of his friends were hanged. Perhaps he was fighting for a lost cause. Probably, he thought that it was cowardice on his part to play hide and seek with Scotland Yard when his men were going to the gallows. He was their leader. He would put up a brave face and if any one was to receive a bullet, let him be that man.

False logic no doubt, but it was a perfect, "Savarkarian" move. He was a brilliant antithesis, a compound of contradictions—a man discerning and indiscreet, judicious and foolish. He forgot that a leader must be saved not for the leader's sake but for the sake of those who were led. He thought like Napoleon :

"Il ne faut qu'un homme, un signal ; les elements l'une revolution sont tout prêts. Qui Commencera ? Des qu'il y aura Un point d'appui, tout S'elranlera".

When the time would be ripe for revolution every one would simultaneously begin.

Savarkar was arrested and sent for trial in India. On his way to India he began to think of the means of escape from the ship. Within the four walls of a small room and guarded by men ready to shoot at any questionable tactics of the prisoner, an ordinary brain could not think of such a step. But Savarkar not only thought, but also translated the thought into action. When the ship was nearing the port of Marseilles, he bluffed the man on duty with an ingenuous trick, and jumped in the sea and escaped. But his freedom lasted for a few hours,

## **BINAYAK DAMODAR SAVARKAR**

after which he was brought back to the ship from the dockyard of Marseilles. India Government sentenced him with transportation for life. At first he was sent to the Andamans and after a considerable time he was brought back to India and interned at Ratnagiri in Bombay.

From 1909 to 1936 it was a history of long suffering for Savarkar. The year 1937 saw him liberated once again. Savarkar came out again as a popular figure. But Savarkar of 1906-9 was a different man. At that time his nationalism was not based on the substratum of communalism, but after 1937 he joined the Hindu-Mahasabha to be its president, and the glorious rebel of India, since then, has been trying to enter the field of nationalist politics by the religious back door. Jinnah, his precursor, said of himself : "Once I was known to be the purest nationalist but no one can be a genuine nationalist who does not recognise the claims of his community." This statement may sum up his opponent's views also. Savarkar, to steal a phrase from Mr. Alva Joachim "being a superabundance of activity loved to roll in the high waters of bloody revolution and back waters of communal stagnation as long as both moved him into action."

### **Books by Savarkar :**

- (1) Mazzini's Works translated in Marathi.
- (2) The War of Independence.
- (3) Hindutwa.
- (4) Hindu-Pad-Padsahi.
- (5) Echoes from Andaman.
- (6) Hindu Sangathan.
- (7) Speeches.
- (8) Poems in Marathi.

## SIR TEJBAHADUR SAPRU

( B. 1875 )

( I )

Sapru is a name respected all over the country. Yet Tej Bahadur has done nothing spectacular in his life, has led no movement, has never been in prison. How then to account for his splendid fame, the confidence his name inspires ?

The hardest and the most admirable achievement of a man in public life is to stand for something. Sapru does. He represents all that is dignified, decent and rational in Indian political life. A constitutionalist by conviction he has laboured hard in his own way for the advancement of his country's interests and the people with their unerring instinct in such things know him to be a champion. He has been intimately connected with the great constitutional changes of 1919 and 1935. He knows the ins and outs of the constitutional machinery as no other man does. A great lawyer, he is by common consent the greatest authority in India on Constitutional Law. When Sapru speaks the whole of India listens with respectful attention as to the voice of a master.

( II )

Tej Bahadur Sapru belongs to the Pandit community of Kashmir, that exceptionally gifted race which has maintained through the centuries in the face of dire adversity its ethnic purity and intellectual pre-eminence. The Kashmiri Pandit with his luminous intellect makes his mark wherever he goes and he goes everywhere. Bengal had her Shumbhoo Nath Pandit and the United Provinces the Nehrus and the Saprus, Kunzru and Katju.



Born in 1875 Tej Bahadur was about ten years old when the Indian National Congress came into existence. At a very early age he developed an interest in public affairs. He used to discuss with his fellow students of the Agra College various public questions and particularly the activities of the Congress. He had a brilliant academic career though it is curious to note that being weak in Mathematics he failed in his first Arts. He joined the Allahabad Bar as an Advocate in 1896. His academic distinctions and scintillating merit secured him the editorship of the Allahabad Law Journal in 1904. He had also by that time established a reputation as a lawyer of exceptional calibre. Sapru began to be widely known and appreciated. He held radical views on social, religious and political questions. He became the central figure of a thoughtful group of youngmen. In 1906 he became a member of the All India Congress Committee.

( III )

Sapru's political career shows a remarkable consistency. There are no sudden shifts or turns. He is no ~~extremist~~ turned moderate in the evening of life, no victim of intellectual or moral fatigue. He did sever connection with the new Congress which was heading towards Non-co-operation. He joined the Liberal Federation which took over the old creed of the Congress. The Moderate Congress lived on in the Liberal Federation and Sapru might well say that he is still a Congressman. A disciple of Gokhale he carries on the Moderate tradition of evolutionary progress through constitutional means.

Sapru's direct contact with the governmental machinery began with his entry into the United Provinces Legislative Council in 1913. Three years later he was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council, as the Central Legislature was

then called. The Great war was on at that time and Sapru rendered active help to the Government. But there was deep dissatisfaction in the country and in October, 1916 Sapru along with eighteen other elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council, among whom were Maharajah Nandy, D. E. Wacha, Mazharul Haque, Jinnah and Srinivasa Sastri, submitted a memorandum to the Government of India suggesting reform of the constitution after the War. In 1918 the Southborough Commission came out to India to determine franchises and constituencies in order to give effect to the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals and Sapru served as a member of that committee. The following year Sapru went to England as a member of the Moderate Deputation and gave evidence before the joint Parliamentary Committee presided over by Lord Selborne. A grave moral dilemma faced Sapru when, after the Punjab atrocities, Sir Shankaran Nair resigned from Law Membership of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the post was offered to him. With his characteristic courage and independence Sapru accepted the post and during three difficult years discharged the heavy duties of his office with great ability and conscientiousness. He never refrained, as Andrews records, from giving unpalatable advice whenever the interests of the country demanded it. During his tenure of office the notorious Press Act of 1910 was taken off the Statute Book. Sapru had also a great deal to do in persuading the viceroy Lord Reading to agree to a Round Table meeting with the imprisoned Congress leaders at the time of the Prince of Wales boycott in 1921-2. These schemes however fell through on account of Gandhiji's intransigence.

Sapru proved himself a sturdy champion of Indians abroad at the Imperial Conference held in London in 1923. Some of his utterances in that Conference have become famous. "I can

say with pride" he said, "that it is my country that makes the Empire imperial". The arrogance of Smuts provoked this outburst : "We claim along with you equal citizenship in the same Empire. We are not willing to be relegated from King George's dining hall to King George's stables". Sapru kept up his interest in the lot of Indians abroad and was closely associated with C. F. Andrews in this work.

Constitutional problems again engaged his attention. Difficulties had been experienced in the working of Diarchy and in 1924 the Government of India appointed the Reforms Enquiry Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Alexander Muddiman. Sapru was a member of this Committee and he along with three other Indian members submitted a minority Report suggesting a thorough reconsideration of the constitutional position. The pitiable condition of the Indians in South Africa, Kenya and Fiji, the nation-wide unrest and the fierce repression had convinced Sir Tej of the utter inadequacy of the Montford Constitution and the imperative and immediate necessity of the grant of full self-government. When the "all-white" Simon Commission arrived in 1927 Sir Tej foresaw its reactionary nature and gave the lead in boycotting it. When the Nehru Committee was formed the next year he gladly joined it. He was the author of a substantial part of the famous Nehru Report which laid before the country and the Government the blue print of a democratic constitution on the basis of complete responsible government.

The Nehru Report had its effect and the Labour Government of Ramsay Macdonald summoned a Round Table Conference in London. The first session was held in the winter of 1930. Sapru who expected great things from this Conference, attended it as a representative of British India. He was in his elements there and with his masterly grasp of constitutional matters

made a profound impression on the delegates Indian and English alike. He pressed strenuously the demand for Dominion Status—"India wants" he said, "and is determined to achieve a status of equality—equality with the other free members of the British Commonwealth—an equality which will give it a government not merely responsive but responsible to the popular voice." The idea of an All-India Federation emerged at this Conference and the man chiefly responsible for this important development was Sir Tej. The Congress had boycotted this session but sent Gandhiji as its representative at the second Round Table Conference held in the latter part of 1931. This was made possible by the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. It was Sapru and Jayakar's patient and untiring efforts which brought about this truce. But this second session was a complete failure and Sapru's hopes were dashed to the ground. He was however not a man to give up easily. He attended the third session also in 1932 and did what he could to minimise mischief, fighting hard for greater popular control over the country's affairs including defence, financial autonomy and speedy inauguration of Federation. The White Paper profoundly disappointed him but with his characteristic doggedness he attended the meetings of the Joint Parliamentary Committee which considered the White Paper. The enactment of the Government of India Act in its present form gave a rude shock to all Liberals including Sapru. It is said that since then Sir Tej has lost faith in the British people and the Parliament.

Sapru welcomed the Congress decision to accept offices and to work the constitution for all it was worth. He was critical of many of the radical measures of the Congress Government of U. P. but when after the outbreak of the World War the Congress ministries resigned none deplored the fact more than Sir Tej. He voiced his opposition against Civil Disobedience

and urged support to the War on the basis of an assurance of Dominionhood in two years after the war and the immediate introduction of a fully national government at the Centre. Early in 1941 he organised the 'Non-Party Leaders Conference' which as a 'centre party' did much useful work during the enforced absence of the Congress. The callousness of the bureaucracy was a revelation to Sapru who began to grow impatient. When Churchill attempted a verbose explanation why the Atlantic Charter could have no application to India he sarcastically commented whether such masters of the English language as Churchill and Amery could not express their desire for India's freedom in unambiguous language. The Japanese advance towards the frontier of India alarmed him and with other leaders he sent a memorable cable to Churchill: "The heart of India must be touched..." He welcomed the Cripps Offer but strongly criticised its provisions giving liberty of non-accession to the constituent units, and the denial of the right of the States people to elect representatives to the Federal Legislature. Sapru regretted the failure of the talks and the subsequent militant attitude of the Congress. "It is my emphatic opinion", he earnestly pleaded, "that no one has got the right to gamble with the lives and safety of four hundred million people at a time when our internal dissensions and civil strife must bring joy and encouragement to the hearts of the Japanese." But the ferocity with which repression was carried on staggered Sapru. The report of the 'Non-Party Leaders Conference' which met at Allahabad in December, 1942 under his presidentship warned the Government of the unwisdom of their ways. "Britain can gain the friendship of India" he said, "not by boasting that the number of British troops in this country is greater now than it was ever before in the history of the British connection but by transferring the

largest amount of power to Indians during the war and thus convincing them that "the British authorities genuinely desire to make India free and self-governing." The patronising and self-righteous attitude and the insulting statements of L. S. Amery the then Secretary of State for India maddened Sir Tej. Towards the end of 1942 Sir Tej suggested that the office of the Secretary of State should be abolished and that the Governor-general should become a member of the British Government as Minister of State. The worsening communal situation in the country mortified him and the urgent problem of arriving at a settlement and framing a constitution acceptable to all sections of the people engaged his serious attention. While emphatically opposed to a division of India he pleaded for a fair deal to the minorities and suggested formation of coalition ministries in the provinces. He knew that all talk of communal settlement was futile so long as the Congress leaders were in prison. He therefore urged the Government to release Mahatma Gandhi forthwith so that concrete steps could be taken towards a settlement, which he believed was possible with goodwill on both sides in the face of the common enemy. Sapru's idea of a rational solution of the communal problem found expression in a notable document—a veritable tour de force—the constitution framed by the Conciliation Committee on the twin principles of the unity of India and "parity of representation." The Report however has failed to make any impression and it has not received the support of any important political party.

Somehow Sapru has not been effective in politics. He cannot reach the subconscious of the people. His utter clarity of thought leaves no scope for vision and bold action. He is out of sympathy with the emotional urges of the people and his wise counsels go unheeded. His legal approach to questions and his terse and matter of fact way of expressing himself

sets no heart throbbing. As C. F. Andrews has said, "He is wedded to law and not to politics."

( IV )

As a constitutional lawyer Sapru has no equal in India. But he is also a keen general practitioner and has successfully handled both civil and criminal cases. A Doctor of Law—he is a D. C. L. of the Oxford University and an L. L. D. of the Allahabad University—he brings the scholarly touch into his arguments. With his deep and accurate scholarship, his perfect forensic manner, dignified bearing and rich voice Sir Tej takes his place among the great advocates of India. He has appeared in many cause celebres and his services have been sought from all parts of the country. His brilliant defence of 'the Leader' of Allahabad and his forceful argument in the 'Searchlight contempt case' where he appeared in a panel of the most distinguished advocates of India will rank as classic pieces of the forensic art. His appearance before the Calcutta High Court in the 'Amrita Bazar Patrika Contempt case' remains a cherished memory with the members of the Calcutta Bar. An eager crowd of admirers, lawyers and laymen lined the whole length of the corridor as Sir Tej, handsome, dignified and perfectly dressed, walked towards the Court room. In the Court room itself not an inch of standing space was vacant. As a contemporary journal observed: "From the Bar table up to the farthest end of the room, it was one vast expanse of billowy black, relieved by the brown of the faces and the glint of the glasses." Such is the magic of Sapru's name.

( V )

The Government has heaped honours on Sapru. He has been knighted and made a K. C. S. I. and a Privy Councillor

But honours came to Sapru unsought and he does not lay much store by them. They do not affect his political views and, any way, they have not prevented him from speaking his mind.

For about half a century Sir Tej has played a leading part in the public life of India and particularly of the United Provinces his adopted home. He has initiated movements for social reform and has himself set an example of religious tolerance. He has been closely connected with the great universities of Allahabad and Benares. He has been a bounteous friend to the student community and many a young man owes his career to him. He deeply felt for the sad lot of the unemployed educated youths and as chairman of the 'U. P. Unemployment Committee' drew up a monumental report dealing with the problem in all its aspects and suggesting bold remedies. How deeply he felt about this question is seen from his speech on the subject to the Lucknow legislators: "I can say that I am very much in touch with the student population. They come to me with piteous appeals. I have kept a record of many of the applications that I have received and I do feel that there is nothing more demoralising to a youngman than that he should have to go from door to door asking for help and asking for recommendations for this job or that job and then ultimately finding that there is nothing for him to do. Frankly, Sir, I am not at all surprised that there should be so much discontent and bitterness among the youngmen of these provinces. If I was not sixty but only twenty and I found that the society of which I was a member and that the Government of which I was a subject made it impossible for me to earn a decent living and to get two square meals a day, why my thoughts would also be running on the lines on which the thoughts of the youngmen are running now."



( VI )

Walter Bagehot says that constitutional politicians are men of common opinion and uncommon ability. Sapru is unique in this that he has always held uncommon opinions. With his "rugged independence" and fastidious intellect it could not be otherwise. Recently he broke with his party the Liberal Federation over which he had once presided. Someone has aptly said that Sapru in his mental processes is more a Scotchman than Indian.

A charming and lovable man, he is warm to his friends and to the members of his family. He can even enjoy a joke against himself, as Nehru says. His courtesy and hospitality are legendary. Allahabad still wistfully recalls the days when Sapru used to hold his "Durbars" in his gorgeous drawing room and talk to the brilliant gathering on men and things, politics or poetry in polished Urdu. A deep Persian scholar, Sapru's favourite relaxation, it is said, is to attend some Urdu literary contest. He is indeed a fine representative of the fascinating and decorous culture developed in Agra and Oudh by aristocratic Muslims. The best of the East and the West that is 'Pundit' Tej Bahadur Sapru.

APPENDIX

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Madan Mohan Malaviya

## PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

( B. 1861— )

The life of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is a converging point of conflicting tendencies—of religious orthodoxy and ardent nationalism, of conservatism and radicalism, of moderation and progress, of unbending will and courage, and uncommon tenderness of heart. The deliverance of India from the thralldom of foreign imperialistic rule may require the life-long services of politicians and statesmen inspired by unflinching zeal and unstinted spirit of sacrifice—but the emancipation of the millions of our countrymen from the cruel grip of poverty and ignorance underlines the need for a batch of social workers—men full with the 'milk of human kindness'—who will toil and offer their lives at the altar of suffering humanity. The life of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya—the grand old man of Indian politics—is undoubtedly a fulfilment of both these requirements.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya—the most veteran politician of modern India is seven years older than Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of our nation and has just completed his eighty-fourth year. For over fifty years he is connected with all the great political movements that have swept over the country and there is scarcely any social, religious or philanthropic institution in India where his hallowed name does not occupy a prominent place. Indeed his very name revives in our mind the memories of toils and turmoils—of sorrows and sufferings—of failures and victories that had befallen the fate of India in her historic fight for freedom during the last few decades.

The name of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has already passed into history. As stated earlier no other leader in recent

times presents such a marked contradiction of character as the hero of our biography. On the one hand he is an austere Hindu Brahmin, eager to revive the ancient Hindu customs and manners practised by sages gone by in the arena of modern political life, and on the other he is a staunch nationalist Indian, prepared to spend his energy for the freedom of the motherland irrespective of caste, creed or colours. One wonders therefore to discover how such apparent divergences of mind are beautifully reconciled to render Malaviyaji what he is to day. It indeed sounds paradoxical that the same man was thrice elected the President of the Indian National Congress—in the years 1909, 1918 and 1933, and thrice the President of the All India Hindu Mahasaba, in the years 1923, 1924 and 1936. But the mystery resolves itself before one who has followed twists of Malaviyaji's character carefully and minutely, for Malaviyaji's Hinduism is not the corrupt practices of the professional preachers, but the ancient religion of the revered sages of Yore, as based on universal love and brotherhood of man—a noble creed and an elevating principle.

A comparative estimate of the lives and principles of Malaviyaji and Mahatmaji offers a very interesting study. Though both are essentially great political figures of India, there is a beautiful mixture of patriotism and spiritualism in their character which has elevated their politics to rare height and lofty peaks. But whereas Mahatmaji is essentially a political leader and his religion is the religion of man, of universal brotherhood, Malaviyaji is essentially a spiritual leader and his religion is the ancient conservative Hinduism in its undiluted form and naked appearance. He can undertake social reforms only when they do not come in conflict with the ancient tradition of the Hindu religion—but when they find no

sanction in the 'Shastras' even his ardent love for his country cannot compel him to undertake the task. This characteristic trend of Malaviyaji's mind is clearly manifested in the fact that when Mahatmaji launched his campaign for the removal of untouchability from India, Malaviyaji lent his wholehearted support to this task and showed with ample quotations from the Hindu scriptures that nowhere in the Shastras could be found any support to the hated system of untouchability prevailing in India. But when, on the other hand, an attempt was made in the Central Legislature for the legislation of an Act forbidding child marriage among the Hindus, Malaviyaji's Hinduism came in the way and he became a bitter opponent of this scheme, though his humanitarianism urged him to advise others to prohibit this system as far as practicable.

But it is a feature of his political life that with the growth of time the Hindu in him is steadily getting the upper hand and his fervent nationalism is gradually losing ground. So one reads with a sigh of relief and a note of profound pleasure in the daily papers a few months back that Malaviyaji, the great supporter of Hindu orthodoxy, has again joined the Congress to serve the nation in a befitting manner. That single instance reveals as if in a flash, the deep and enormous interest Malaviyaji takes for the country even at this old age.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya comes of an orthodox Brahmin family of Malawa. His father Pandit Brijnath was a reputed preacher in the then Hindu Society. His exposition of Srimat Vagabat and Puranas bear eloquent testimony to his erudite scholarship. Pandit Brijnath educated his children with great strain as the family was not wealthy.

Pandit Malaviya received his early education in Sanskrit in two Pathshalas—the Dharma Gnanopodesh Pathshala and afterwards the Vidya Dharma Vardhini Sabha. He was later sent

to the Allahabad Zilla School, but as the Allahabad University was not in existence in 1879, he had to pass his Entrance Examination from the Calcutta University. Then he joined the Muir Central College at Allahabad and graduated from the said University in 1884. Malaviyaji inherited a deep love for study from his father and even from his boyhood days revealed a keen interest in social and political problems—his favourite subjects being religion and education, in the wider context of modern political life.

It is stated earlier that Malaviyaji's family had to live in constant poverty and wants. Hence he had to accept the post of an assistant teacher in the Government High School at Allahabad with a meagre monthly salary of fifty rupees only in the year 1885. During this part of his life, one man more than anybody else exercised tremendous influence on his mind—it was his Guru Adityaram, Professor of the Muir Central College and a delegate of the Calcutta Congress of 1886. With his Guru he also took active interest in politics and participated in the social or political movement of his days—although he was still at that time a Government servant.

The part of Malviyaji's life, spent in editing several nationalistic journals covers more than two decades—roughly from the year 1885 to the year 1907. He became the editor of the 'Indian Union', an independent organ of nationalists in 1887 while still holding the post of the assistant teacher. Later on he relinquished his job and accepted the editorship of the 'Hindusthan' in the middle of 1887 on a monthly salary of two hundred rupees only and he remained in that position for two years. He took to journalism not merely with the pecuniary motive but it was his firm conviction that journalism is but another way of imparting true education to the dumb millions of our countrymen. Later on



however he started the weekly Hindi paper the 'Abhyudaya' and worked hard to make it really instructive and informative to the country. Through these journals he formulated and guided the public opinion of the country with remarkable honesty and precision. Malaviyaji keenly felt the want of an English Daily in Allahabad and laboured hard to bring the 'Leader' into existence to voice the needs and grievances of the people of the province.

The legal career of Malaviyaji dates from the year 1889 when he joined the Law classes at Allahabad. It was practically at the advice and suggestion of Mr. A. O. Hume, the founder of the National Congress that he thought of qualifying himself for the Bar. He took his L. L. B. Degree in 1891 and joined the High Court at Allahabad as a Vakil in 1893. It will not be out of place to mention in this connection the famous statement of Mr. Hume addressed to Malaviyaji—"Madan Mohan, God has endowed you with plenty of brains. Slave at the profession for ten years and you are bound to get to the top. Then your public usefulness will increase greatly owing to the position you will attain and you can do much for the country". But unhappily this prophecy never came to be true and Malaviyaji never reached the topmost places in the Bar, partly for his extremely spiritual turn of mind and partly for his neglect of proper opportunity. One of the Indian leaders of the Bar once remarked, "Malaviyaji had the ball at his feet but he refused to kick it."

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya joined the Indian National Congress in the year 1886 when its second session was held under the presidency of Dadabhai Nouraji at Calcutta and it was since then that Malaviyaji's political career took its eventful course. He was elected a member of the Provincial Legislative

Council in 1902 where he remained for a decade. In the Council he was always a mouthpiece of opposition to the Government in all public questions affecting the interests of the country.

Then came the Great War of 1914 in Europe and with it a blast of storm passed over the political horizon of India. Indians were asked to contribute their share in the war with men and materials in lieu of which they were promised a progressive realisation of responsible Government after the cessation of hostility. India sincerely believed in the declaration of Mr. Lloyd George the then Premier of England and helped the Britisher with men and money to achieve victory. But after the war ended successfully with a crushing defeat to the enemies in 1919 the Imperial Government clearly forgot her statement and denied her promise, and the reward of India came in the form of the Rowlatt Act which had authorised the police to imprison any suspected person without trial, and the disgraceful Amritsar massacre at Jalianwallahbag where more than one thousand peaceful individuals were cruelly butchered by the armed police. Malaviyaji a fiery orator as he was, vehemently attacked in the Central Legislative Council the naked imperialism of the British Government as manifested in these condemnable acts and pleaded for a thorough change of Government policy in India. It was he, who could first give to the world a graphic account of India's humiliation at Amritsar.

Just at that crucial moment in national history, Mahatma Gandhi appeared on the Indian scene and launched the first Non-co-operation movement in 1920. Malaviyaji, so long an ardent champion of the country's freedom and sincere congressman of the Province was oppressed with a keen conflict in his mind. Partly because of his liberal outlook which urged him to arrive at a compromise with the alien rule and partly

because of the Moplah Revolt, when certain Hindus were forcibly converted into "Islam"—immediately after the Khilafat movement. Malaviyaji at first hesitated to decide whether to join the movement or to stay apart. But gradually the greater call of the country overtook him and he joined the Non-cooperation movement started by Gandhiji.

But Malaviyaji was really glad at heart when he heard that the movement was suspended due to an unhappy incident at Chauri Chaura following the complete 'hartal' at the visit of the Prince of Wales in India and a tussle was going on in Congress circles on the issue of council entries. Malaviyaji renounced the movement and he wholeheartedly joined the Imperial Legislative Council and Assembly when Pandit Nehru and Deshbandhu C. B. Das two of the foremost political leaders of the day, announced their plan of forming the 'Swaraj party' and joining the Legislative Assemblies to carry on the fight for freedom from inside its platforms. There in the Legislatures, Malaviyaji displayed his oratorical skill and eloquence. He condemned bitterly the Government policy of exporting Indian labour to foreign lands and attacked vehemently the gross misrule and disorder prevailing in the Punjab.

People naturally expected Malaviyaji to join the 'Swaraj party' of Pandit Nehru and Deshbandhu Das because Malaviyaji was always a liberal ever fearing the extremist camp of the Congress. Malaviyaji did not join it contrary to popular expectation and founded a new party called the 'Nationalist party' to fight the Communal award—a party solely for the Hindus with Lala Lajpat Rai as its chief pillar of strength. The cause of the birth of the 'Nationalist party' may be two fold. Firstly Malaviyaji did not like the idea of the Swaraj Party to strike at the root of the Government from inside the Legislature and secondly Malaviyaji was intellectually in close contact

with the Hindu Mahasabha and it was very difficult for him to reconcile his Hinduism with the radical nationalism of the Swarajists.

Time passed swiftly and Malaviyaji's political outlook underwent a thorough transformation through the utter incompetence and gross misrule of the Government. So that when in 1930 Mahatma Gandhi launched his first Civil Disobedience movement Malaviyaji cast off the conflicts of his mind, wholeheartedly joined the movement and went to gaol repeatedly. And when due to the passing of several ordinances by the Government following the arrest of Gandhiji in his historic march to Dandi and the salt campaign, there was a great political unrest in Bombay, Malaviyaji and the members of the Congress Working Committee at the head of a huge crowd offered Satyagraha on the footpaths of Bombay and spent the night facing the police who had blocked their way. Again in 1933 Malaviyaji was arrested along with Mrs. Swarup Nehru, Jawaharlalji's mother while coming to attend the Calcutta session of the Congress and were detained in a prison for a few days.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gives a graphic account of the prison-life of Pandit Malaviya in the Naini gaol in his inimitable style, narrating how the old man was full of youthful vitality, how he began to learn German from Ranjit, how he grew ill due to the biting cold inside the closed doors of the prison, how his illness took a serious turn and became a cause of anxiety, and how, in the long run he was released and transferred to the town hospital where gradually he recouped.

In his political career Malaviyaji was influenced by the life and speeches of one of the greatest politician that England has ever produced—Gladstone. Even the speeches that he used to deliver in the Legislatures were based on the historic orations

of the English Prime Minister. Malaviyaji's religious outlook and the spiritual way of his looking at things were just compatible with the liberal attitude of his mind and therefore he followed in the footsteps of the 19th century liberal premier of England—Gladstone.

Though politically and sentimentally he had been a friend, philosopher and guide to the numerous congressmen of the country he was out and out a nationalist Hindu, not concerned with social or economic changes. He made no secret of his friendship with the Hindu Princes of India. It can be stated without prejudice to the great name of the great leader that the Zemindars and the Taluqdars found in him a benevolent friend.

Apart from his political greatness Malaviyaji is essentially a social and religious worker. Even after the Jalianwallabag massacre when martial law was withdrawn he, along with many other prominent congressmen offered unwavering services to the relief and enquiry work in the Punjab. Later on, as the vice-chairman of the Allahabad Municipal Board and a fellow of the Municipality he displayed great moderation and ability and his spirit of independence was much appreciated by all concerned. He was an ardent champion of the Swadeshi movement and a member of the 'Sanitary Conference' held at Naini by the Local Government and a member of the Indian Industrial Commission from 1916 to 1918. Also in the Legislative council he urged the Government to erect model bustees at Allahabad.

Pandit Malaviya is essentially a man of religion. He is as if the modern incarnation of the spiritualism of the ancient sages. His zeal and fervour in religion is proved by the fact that when the provincial Government prohibited bathing at the 'Triveni' during the 'Kumbha Melas' at Allahabad, Malaviyaji

was so much agitated over the issue that he along with 200 of his followers offered *Satyagraha* on the sands near the high palisade with the regular cavalry placed around them, till after a time he suddenly took a dip in the Ganges in a most extraordinary way and in the end the military police had to leave the place in disgust.

Malaviyaji is known throughout the length and breadth of India as the founder of the Hindu University also known as the *Bharatiya Viswa Vidyalaya* of Benares.

The object held in view in establishing this institution for the Hindus is to combine religious faith with sound education, and to quote his own words, it is a scheme, "where scientific, technical and industrial education is to be combined with religious instruction and classical culture." Indeed few are aware of the gigantic suffering and tremendous hardship, Malaviyaji had to endure in executing this Herculean task which was made more difficult by the popular misgivings regarding the formation of such a communal educational institution in the country. "But hope eternal burns in him like a sacred pillar of fire," so that this "holy madness" inspired him to undertake such a noble adventure. He travelled throughout India, begged from door to door and the reception he got from the Hindu princes all over the country was overwhelming. Such an university is indeed rare in the country and apart from its ancient counterpart as furnished by the great Nalanda University of old had a noble second in the *Viswabharati* at *Shantiniketan*—both having the same object in view, though the latter is by far more cosmopolitan and international in outlook.

An apprehension looms large in the mind of an average Indian that in these days of communal fratricide, the Hindu University in the north western part of the United Provinces and the Muslim *Aligarh* University in the South Western part

of the same province it may well become the springboards of communalism for the whole of India, but to one who knows Malaviyaji, such a fear is absolutely groundless ; for Malaviyaji's motive is lofty and so long as he is alive to guide the paths of the University we may reasonably hope that instead of aggravating communal tension it will foster the essence of true religion—universal brotherhood of man under the common fatherhood of God.

Malaviyaji the politician may be great but Malaviyaji the man is definitely greater. He has indeed rare qualities of head and heart and all who came in contact with the soft and kind nature of his heart are charmed with him. So also in the sphere of philanthropic work he has seldom any equal. As an instance may be cited the occasion when plague broke out in Allahabad and Malaviyaji, the then vice-chairman of the Municipal Board personally inspected and served the helpless victims in the dark lanes in a 'Mandi' and later established health camps all over the city to afford protection to the needy and the suffering. Indeed the secret of his immense popularity all over the country is his noble conduct and saintly character, his liberal outlook and wide breadth of vision which enable him to view every question in a broad perspective.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is a curious personality. He is intellectually a liberal, communally a Hindu sabbite and emotionally a Congressman not concerned with social or economic changes. Pandit Nehru gives a short account of his personality in his autobiography—a description that reveals him completely—"his heart is thus often in the Congress camps, especially in times of struggle but his head was in other camps. The political training and reading of his youth still influence his mind greatly and he looks upon the revolutionary post-war world of the 20th century with the spectacles of a semi-static

## EMINENT INDIANS

19th century of T. E. Green and John Stuart Mill and Gladstone and Morley and a three or four thousand year background of old Hindu culture and sociology. Both by his age and his long public record he is the Nestor of Indian politics but a Nestor who seems little out of date and very much out of touch with the modern world".

Malaviyaji's life is indeed an essay in simplicity and asceticism with self-abnegation as its guiding principle. Days are indeed not very far when India will attain her much-coveted independence and in that happy period, when true and real history of India will be written, Malaviyaji's name will be printed in letter of gold not merely as one of the old vanguards of the Congress awakening the dumb millions of the country, or as an ardent Hindu Sabhite maintaining the closest contact with the Hindu masses of India, but as one of the first few Indians who have endeavoured successfully to solve the multifarious problems of his countrymen—religious, educational and social.

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## BHULABHAI J. DESAI

( 1877—1946 )

"As long as brother denies to brother justice and equal opportunity so long must the hand of each be against the other. The stronger will make the law and the weaker will break it."

—Bhulabhai J. Desai.

( ३ )

A hopeful feature of India's constitutional development has been the growth of genuine parliamentary tradition. This has been mainly the work of lawyer politicians. But there has been undoubtedly a general revival of native democratic ideas. Scholars have discovered in dim antiquity the existence and functioning of republics and democratic institutions on Indian soil and have rediscovered in the village panchayet the tenacious continuity of primitive democracy. Poets and thinkers also have found in the living tradition of non-violence, the essential principle of democracy.

With the formation of the Swarajya Party in 1923 a new chapter opens in Indian politics. Das and Nehru gave the people a new weapon, a new technique of struggle. The congress strategy was expanded and the swarajist scheme of constitutional struggle was incorporated therein. In 1923 there was no question of acceptance of offices. The swarajists entered the Legislature with the sole intention of breaking the Montford Constitution. But in the course of a few years the swarajists were filling a constitutional role in the legislatures and functioning as a party in opposition. The destructive phase had passed away. By the time the Civil

Disobedience movement was started the Swarajya Party was dead to all intents and purposes. It had however a resurrection in 1938. When Civil Disobedience failed of its object and the country law groaning under a heavy load of repressive laws sage congressmen felt the necessity of switching the struggle on to the constitutional plane. So the Swarajya Party was revived with a twofold object: (1) to get repressive laws repealed and (2) to reject the White Paper and press the National Demand. The proposal having a constructive aspect received Gandhiji's assent. Among those responsible for the revival and re-orientation of the Swarajya Party was Bhulabhai Desai. With C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru and V. J. Patel Bhulabhai stands as a maker of modern India's parliamentary tradition.

( II )

Bhulabhai Jeewanji Desai was born in 1877 of poor parents in a small village in Gujarat. Bhulabhai was a clever boy and his father Jeewanji thought that it would be as well if he had some education. So Bhulabhai went to school. But going to school was no fun. The school was far from home and of course he had to go all the way on foot. To add to difficulties a stream ran right across the path. It was fordable but a boy of seven could not expect to arrive at the other bank quite dry. Little Bhulabhai solved the problem by wading across the stream with his dhoti which was all he wore held aloft in his hands.

Of those hard days Bhulabhai still has a vivid recollection. In quiet moments he would talk about them to young men and women in his charming way. But he has no illusion about poverty. When his only son Dhirubhai reached his twenty-first year Bhulabhai gave him as a present a Rolls Royce car.

When Bhulabhai wound up his "some education" with the M. A. degree of the Bombay University he had grown into a learned and a very ambitious man. However to keep the pot boiling he accepted a lecturer's post in the Gujarat College at Ahmedabad. He proved to be a brilliant teacher of History and Economics and he won the hearts of the students by his consideration, sympathy and gentleness of manners.

This college interlude was wholly beneficial for Bhulabhai. The tranquil atmosphere of an educational institution helped to develop in him an attitude of broad-minded tolerance of other people's views. Association with students also tended to strengthen his own liberal opinions on social and religious questions. Above all by lecturing to his young pupils he learnt from day to day the secret of simple and lucid expression and how to convince and persuade.

In India to be a teacher is to join the ranks of the ineffectives. The dictum of Bernard Shaw : "Those who can do ; those who cannot teach" is true in this country as nowhere else. It was not to be expected therefore that a man like Bhulabhai young, brilliant and ambitious would be content to end his days as a pedagogue. Bhulabhai indeed felt that his talents could not be fully developed in the profession of a teacher. He wanted a larger field and a bigger reward for his activities. The legal profession naturally commended itself to him. Moreover he was fully conscious of the power of his well-modulated voice and persuasive tongue.

### ( III )

So Bhulabhai left Ahmedabad and his pupils, took the L. L. B. degree and joined the Bombay High Court as an Advocate entitled to practise on the Original Side. As a junior Advocate he earned the reputation of being one of the most industrious

and painstaking members of the Bar. He was always well-prepared with his briefs and rarely slipped on a question of fact. His assistance was therefore much valued by senior Advocates who among themselves would tip him as the "coming man." He was equally popular with the Bench. His pleasing tone and accent, suave and graceful manner and tactful presentation of cases impressed favourably even the crustiest of judges. No wonder that he reached the top of the profession and began to earn a princely income. In 1926, a few years before he joined politics, Government recognised his eminence and appointed him to officiate as Advocate General of Bombay in place of Sir Jamshed B. Kanga.

Desai has not the towering personality of a Rashbehary or a Pherozeshah Mehta, a Nehru or a Das. But he has an unrivalled power of persuasion. He is cool, subtle, precise and "close to the ground." He is a master of legal principles and his exposition of legal points is always full, clear and luminous. His manner of expression is peculiarly felicitous and is remarkable for clarity and precision.

### ( IV )

It is the business of lawyers to act as a link between the state and the individual. In a subject country this must mean at some time or other the assertion of the rights of the subject people against the ruling power grown oppressive. The transition from the individual to the general comes about in the natural course of things. As in the case of individuals, in the case of the nation also the lawyer asks for justice. That is perhaps how it comes about that lawyers found political organisations, form public opinion and become pioneers of freedom movements.

Bhulabhai stayed out of politics for a long time. He resisted the call of the Non-co-operation movement. He felt no enthusiasm for Gandhiji's tall promises about getting "swaraj in a year". On the other hand, sober and sedate as he was, he could not remain indifferent to the political events in the country nor unaffected by the rising tide of nationalism. A seat on the Bench or the post of the Law Member began to lose its charm. In 1928 the Ex-Advocate General of Bombay appeared before the Bloomfield Committee as Advocate for the peasants of Bardoli. It is worth noting that Bhulabhai's able handling of the case averted a no-tax campaign. In 1931 he represented the Congress at the Gordon Enquiry into police excesses at Bardoli. As Government would not produce certain documents required by him Bhulabhai considering that the spirit of the inquiry was hostile to the Congress very properly advised the Congress to withdraw and the inquiry came to nothing.

At this time Bhulabhai became a close associate of Sardar Vallabhai Patel, a man who was to influence him greatly. He had also learnt to appreciate the moral grandeur and even the political instinct of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1932 Bhulabhai took the final plunge and joined the Civil Disobedience Movement as Gandhiji's "lieutenant" and counsellor. He was arrested under the Emergency Powers Ordinance and subsequently tried and sentenced to one year's imprisonment and fined ten thousand rupees. Bhulabhai, like many others was paying the price of justice.

Bhulabhai went to jail for a second time in 1940. The famous August Offer inviting representative Indians to join the Viceroy's Executive Council having been rejected by the Congress in September 1940 the A. I. C. C. sitting at Bombay requested Mahatma Gandhi to take over leadership of the

Congress. About a fortnight after, Gandhiji unfolded his plan of Individual Satyagraha. There was to be a limited number of satyagrahis and each must be approved by the Working Committee. It was not long before Bhulabhai along with most of the members of the Working Committee was arrested under the Defence of India Rules. Bhulabhai was detained in the historic Yervada Jail. There he fell seriously ill and Government released him in September, 1941.

( V ).

Bhulabhai's period of apprenticeship was brief. He practically entered the Congress as a full-fledged leader. He was an influential man in the organisation and occupied important positions. He was president of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, general secretary of the Congress Parliamentary Board, leader of the Congress Party in the Central Legislature, a member of the Working Committee of the Congress. He is in fact the "legal brain" of the Congress and, as John Gunther has said : "Gandhi likes him."

Desai made history as leader of the Congress party in the Central Assembly. Motilalji died in 1931 and Bhulabhai stepped into his shoes. "Bhulabhai" says Dr. Sitaramayya, "brought to the Assembly the same prestige and glamour as Motilalji himself." Under his leadership the Congress party inflicted defeat after defeat on the Government. In the memorable session held early in 1935 Government suffered defeat twice in nine days. The first defeat was on the adjournment motion brought by Sj. N. C. Bardoloi to censure government for preventing Sj. Suresh Chandra Bose from attending the sittings of the Assembly. In an impressive speech Desai dealt with the constitutional aspect of the question and asserted that in

the present case the privilege of the House took the form of the privilege of the individual member and the privilege of an individual member could not be taken away. The Congress managed to carry through the motion by a narrow majority. This was on the 22nd. January, 1935. On the 30th. Government suffered the second defeat over the Indo-British Trade Agreement. Never before had such things happened in the fourteen and odd years of the life of the Assembly.

The debate on the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report is also worth noting for the high level that the speeches reached. Bhulabhai and Jinnah shone particularly. Bhulabhai wanted to scrap the Report altogether. Jinnah wanted the House to accept the Communal Award, to reject the Federation and to demand removal of the objectionable features of the rest. The Law Member Sir N. N. Sircar characterised Bhulabhai's denunciation as "direct, frontal" attack and Jinnah's as "disingenuous and indirect." Desai on this occasion delivered a forceful speech pleading for the total rejection of the Report. "I appeal to the House", he said, "that even if we have not the power to compel the authorities to the grant of what we want, we have certainly the self-respect to repel what we do not want." Unfortunately however Jinnah's amendment was carried by the weight of official votes.

## ( VI )

Desai would have been remembered even if he had done nothing after his achievements in the Central Legislatures. But the I. N. A. trial and his successful defence of three members of it have made of him something of a national hero. The issues involved in the trial were of tremendous political importance and by vindicating the three men Bhulabhai had vindicated the right of subject peoples to fight for their independence.

Shah Nawaz, Sehgal and Dhillon were put on trial before a Court Martial sitting in the Red Fort at Delhi. They were charged with waging war against the King and murder and abetment of murder. Desai submitted that there was practically one charge against the accused. If the first charge was answered the second would not arise. The defence taken by Desai was mainly that the accused were not answerable in municipal law for acts done by them as members of an organised army in due prosecution of a war declared by an organised government. In these words he defined the true scope of the trial and the question really at issue : "This is not at all a case of what you might call three individuals waging war against the king..... The honour and the law of the Indian National Army are on trial before this Court. What is now on trial before the Court is the right to wage war with immunity on the part of a subject race for their liberation." The parties to a war need not be sovereign states. The existence of belligerency is a question of fact and is not to be determined by reference to the relation between the combatants. On the evidence tendered by the prosecution itself Desai showed that the Provisional Government of Azad Hind was a fully organised government and had formally declared war on Britain and America and did carry on war against them through a regular army—the Indian National Army. In such a case how could there be any individual liability on the part of the accused? Modern International Law recognises a war of liberation. "It will be a travesty of justice" urged Desai, "if we were to be told.....that the Indian may go as soldier and fight for the freedom of England against Germany, for England against Italy, and yet a stage may not be reached when a free Indian state may wish to free itself from any country including England itself." On the question of allegiance, which he regarded as irrelevant, Desai



said, "Unless you sell your soul, how can you ever say that when you are fighting to liberate your own country there is some other allegiance which prevents you from so doing." He referred in this connexion to the U. S. Proclamation of Independence :

"We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator by certain inalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

In simple and commonsense way Desai explained to a tribunal of military men complex questions of International Law. As another famous lawyer of Bombay has observed, "No one who reads his speech for the defence can fail to realise that it is an effort worthy of a great and eminent advocate."

( VII )

Desai is not what one would call a nationalist. He is too intellectual to be one. He is accustomed to take a sober and commonsense view of things. He is tolerant to a fault. He believes that his opponents are as human and rational as he himself. He therefore prefers fruitful compromise to sterile conflict. There is this psychological factor behind the pact with Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan. He is one of the few congressmen to take a lenient view of the case of the communists. Many years ago in the Assembly he said : "There is nothing better in life than to fight without rancour and loose without bitterness." Desai is a gentleman and cosmopolite. Incidentally, he has travelled widely in Europe and is an admirer of the civilisation of France.

Desai is a brilliant conversationalist and has a rich sense of humour. What lends so much charm to his personality

is his habit of self depreciation when referring to himself. He caused much amusement in the Assembly by requesting the newly elected President to be considerate with "novices" like himself. A college student who had once approached him for his autograph was greatly embarrassed by his mild remark that he was much flattered by the request. He astonished a young lady, freshly graduated, by reciting nearly the whole of "In Memoriam" and then he quietly remarked; "I have a good mechanical brain."

John Gunther in "Inside Asia" notes that Indians call Desai by his first name Bhulabhai. What better proof than this can there be of the affectionate regard in which he is held by millions of his countrymen ?

#### APPENDIX.

The following books have been consulted in writing this biography :

1. History of the Congress—Sitaramayya
2. Inside Asia—Gunther
3. I. N. A. Defence—Published by Bom. P. C. C.
4. Amritabazar Patrika—Congress Supplement dated the  
9th. March, 1939
5. Indian Year Book and Who's Who—Times of India  
( 1944-45 )

For many personal details thanks are due to

Mrs. D. P. Ghosh.

The quotation at the beginning is from Desai's Foreword to Tarapore's "Prison Reform in India".

# SIR SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN.

( B. 1888— )

## I

Some five years back the young hopefuls of Calcutta University experienced a pleasant thrill. Their George V Professor of Philosophy had been elected Fellow of the British Academy. But older people took it as a matter of course ; they knew that Sir Sarvapalli was born to fame and honour. His very appearance seems to declare this fact. Lean, tall and lithe he looks more subtle than stately. His olive skin, oval face and bright brown eyes speak more of intelligence than of majesty. Add to this a milk-white turban, a milk-white dhoty and a cream-coloured long coat reaching down to the knees, and you get a curious mixture of the swan and the serpent. For he is clean, delicate and graceful as a swan ; and subtle, quick and dazzling as a serpent.

## II

Radhakrishnan was born on 5th September, 1888 in Andhra ; and like all true Telegus he puts the name of his native village, Sarvapalli before his surname. His parents were progressive Brahmins and sought to give their boy the best education then available in Madras Presidency. So he was sent to Madras Christian College and after graduation to the University, where he read deeply in philosophy and widely in general literature.

Radhakrishnan's scholarly gifts were early recognised and he was appointed Professor of Philosophy at Presidency College, Madras, while still very young. But the narrow alley of Madras Presidency College soon led him on to the broad avenue of Mysore University ; he could now move more freely in the

adventure of ideas. His stars seemed to be in the ascendant ; he became Vice-chancellor of the young University of Andhra, his home province. His growing fame had already attracted the notice of the great Sir Asutosh Mukherjee, who was then guiding the destiny of Calcutta University. So when the George V chair of Philosophy in that University fell vacant in 1921, his appointment to it followed as a corollary.

Thanks to the educational statesmanship of Sir Asutosh, Radhakrishnan was able to mould a generation of scholars and to shed some lustre on Calcutta University itself. He was now well on the road to international fame ; by 1926 he was to sail for England as Upton Lecturer. In the same year he crossed the Atlantic as Haskel Lecturer to the University of Chicago. It is but a stones throw from the Upton Lectures to the Hibbert Lectures which he delivered between 1929-30. The British Government in India suddenly awoke to his importance and relieved itself of its bad conscience by throwing him a Knighthood in 1931.

The year 1936 found him Professor of Eastern Religions at Manchester College, Oxford. The reputation he had already built up at Manchester College secured him later on the Spalding chair of Eastern Religions and Ethics in the same University. Henceforward the humanist in him began to swamp the academic don and he was taken on the 'International Committee of Intellectual Co-operation' as a member. The Fellowship of the British Academy was merely the latest feather to his white turban. Purely academic honours now began to seek him out and the Hindu University at Benares elected him Vice-chancellor and professor of Philosophy shortly after his appointment at Oxford. His recent visit to China by invitation from Chungking is a gesture of his recognition as a Representative Man of the East.

## III

Success begets success. But the success which has consistently attended on Radhakrishnan combines both the kinds into which Roosevelt once divided it. Radhakrishnan is a genius, and what he has done no one else could do. He is also a man who has taken pains to develop quite ordinary qualities by long and patient practice. That is the secret of success.

First of all, you are struck by the range and variety of his reading. Few suspect that he is a great reader of fiction. He reads fiction of all sorts and prices; short books, long books, thin books and thick books. When a Research scholar at Calcutta University was planning his Doctorate thesis on Modern Fiction and could not get in wartime the books he wanted, somebody advised him to make use of Radhakrishnan's wide reading. He devours poetry and drama (in defiance of Plato!) in enormous quantities. But then you also marvel at the thoroughness of his digestion. Those barren leaves become the blood, bone and flesh of his idiom.

Radhakrishnan writes with the utmost care; but he never degenerates into the facile. The luminous clarity of his language must be the result of a long and difficult apprenticeship. He is opposed to all fustian and rhetoric; and he has no use for the annoying tricks of English writers, their "much rather" and "perhaps not," their "it looks as if" and "about as much," their "I am afraid" and what not. He is also a past master in the art of quotations. How appropriately does he quote the following while indicting modern civilization!

"We are taught to fly in the air like birds, and to swim in the water like fishes; but how to live on the earth we do not know"—(A peasant on the scientific age).

## IV

As a speaker Radhakrishnan possesses peculiar excellence. He is fluent, argumentative, eloquent and witty. The perfect word, the most vivid phrase come to his lips simply and naturally as buds to spray. You do not know what to admire more—the thought or the speech. And who can be deaf to such a rich voice ?

Radhakrishnan is a great talker and a greater listener. Once he listened to a pupil with vague but fanatic ideas about Communism, and remarked after five minutes : "Comrades have long hairs." He might have shone in the diplomatic service.

Dr. Cyril Joad is impressed by Radhakrishnan's electric wit, notes with delight the Indian philosopher's definition of the Millennium as a time when all the heads will be hard and all the pillows soft, declares that he was not prepared for such things from an Indian and concludes that wit is a fruit which grows very rarely in the jungle of Hindu thought. We cannot blame Dr. Joad ; it is an Englishman's privilege to be ignorant about Indians. Yet we may point out that Indians have been witty in their own way ; to wit Tagore, Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu and, of course, Radhakrishnan.

As a philosopher Radhakrishnan is an idealist ; but he is no abstractionist after Plato or Samkara. His belief in the spirit does not tempt him to blow out time and space : rather he holds that Reality is rooted in process, that divorce of the one from the other must mean death. Thus he is a close neighbour to Hegel and Ramanuja and spins his philosophy, not in a vacuum, but in a world of conflicts and contradictions ; he spins it out of the very fibre of life to weave the rich tapestry of the soul.

Radhakrishnan's philosophy explains his humanism. Still he is a humanist who is also acutely aware of the weakness of the humanist stand-point. He knows that merely human standards cannot guarantee the excellence, much less the holiness, of human relations. Thirst and hunger after righteousness has driven him to the fountainhead of religion. And he has not ceased shouting at his fellows to drink at the source.

V

Humanism was not invented by the West, and it cannot remain a Western monopoly. India and China practised it when Western Europe was still immersed in the Stone Age. Radhakrishnan preaches it today according to the tradition of the East. He calls upon our youth to weed out social evils ; for no good can come to a depressed society, not even spiritual good ( which is supposed to be another worldly commodity ! )

Radhakrishnan does not spare the West either ; he rebukes it for its abundance of stage-furniture and its loss of finer values.

Thus everything has conspired to make Radhakrishnan our ambassador to the West. Through his insight and imagination both East and West may learn much and unlearn more. We should learn that while there is much virtue in a living tradition marching with the times ; there is absolutely none in a dead convention mouldering where it had sprung.

**Books By Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan**

1. The Philosophy of Rabindra Nath Tagore.
2. The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy.

## **EMINENT INDIANS**

3. **The Philosophy of the Upanishads.**
4. **Indian Philosophy.**
5. **The Hindu View of Life.**
6. **The Religion we need.**
7. **Kalki.**
8. **An Idealist view of Life.**
9. **Eastern Religions and Western thought.**
10. **Buddha.**
11. **India and China.**

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## Dr. ZIAUDDIN AHMAD

.( B. 1870— )

Born at Mahrehra, a well-known town in the district of Etawah, United Provinces, in the year 1870 Ziauddin Ahmad started his early education in the town with the local Maulvi, with whom he read the Koran, elementary Urdu and Persian. Later on he was sent to Etawah Muslim High School, where he studied up to class V and showed signs of extra-ordinary intelligence by topping the class in Mathematics and History. Being impressed by his precious growth and sharp mental powers a certain local gentleman wanted to send him to the Aligarh School, then known as the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental Collegiate School, founded by the great Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the first pioneer of Muslim education in India.

During his school career Ziauddin was invariably standing first in the classes, and added to his credit the unbroken record of topping all the examinations from the Matriculation up to M.A. and M.Sc degree examinations of the Allahabad University. From the Intermediate classes young Ziauddin had shown his extraordinary aptitude for Mathematics and later on specialised in this subject with Professor Chakravarty, who was a scholar of repute and an accepted mathematician in the province. Finally Ziauddin secured a first class in Mathematics standing first in the M.Sc degree examination of the Allahabad University, with a special gold medal award for obtaining the highest marks in the subject ever secured by any student. Thus Ziauddin broke the record in India in Mathematics while he was only twenty-two years of age and the eyes of the Muslim leaders and educationists fell on him as the

future doyen of the community, who may lead the Muslim educational movement. Chief of the patrons of young Ziauddin was the famous Mohsinul Mulk, the righthand man of Sir Syed, the then secretary of the 'Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College'. Mohsinul Mulk had the gift of detecting talents and encouraging youngmen with ideas and ambitions. He therefore came to render all the help ungrudgingly to this young and brilliant scholar, who had passed his studenthood in the school and college and had worked against great odds. Nawab Mohsinul Mulk, though known for his conservatism, was a man of great force and influence, standing principally for the oriental culture of Islam, and was regarded by the government and the Muslim community both, as a man of sterling merit possessing high sense of loyalty. Ziauddin was selected by him to be the first scholar of the Aligarh College, who should be sent out to Europe, particularly England, to qualify himself in the foreign universities. The 'Duty Society' of Aligarh, which is the financing body of the Mohammedan educational conference for supporting deserving and brilliant students of the community, came forward to advance a loan to young Ziauddin for prosecuting his studies in Cambridge. So laden with Indian honours young Ziauddin sailed for Europe and Mohsinul Mulk hoped to hear soop of his great achievement in the world of Mathematics from his protegee. Very soon the Indian mathematician received his due recognition in England, and in two years' time, the world heard of a senior Wrangler who after taking a tripos in Mathematics had beaten the English record of Mathematics by being declared a Newton Scholar, obtaining such high marks and distinction as no Indian had done before. For this Ziauddin was awarded a doctorate in Mathematics and a scholarship or honorarium of Rs1,000/- annually extending over a period of

22 years till another Indian scholar of equal repute Sir G. V. Raman had likewise distinguished himself.

Later on Ziauddin qualified himself in Science and Engineering at the Universities of Gottingen and Frankfurt by obtaining the Doctor's degrees from the German Universities. On the continent too, this scholar distinguished himself as he had done in England and India. His brilliance and academic achievements were such that universally he was hailed as one of the most outstanding personalities in the educational sphere of India, and on his return was without question appointed by the same Mohsinul Mulk, a lecturer in the department of Mathematics of the Aligarh College under his respected and loving teacher Professor Chakravarty.

From this day onwards, the scholar of Mathematics became an active educationist, looking forward to the day when he should lead the Muslim community in its educational policy. The Mohammedan Oriental College of Aligarh and the Mohamaden educational conference were developing gradually into bigger institutions attracting greater interest of the Mussalmans of India in order to create the Renaissance of Islam in this country. Young Ziauddin was destined to play a prominent part in the evolution of the Muslim educational movement, which was to be the great precursor of the National Movement of the Mussalmans of India.

The biography of Dr. Ziauddin is from this time, more or less, the history of the Aligarh movement, as he had completely identified himself with it, and dedicated his whole life to the service of his alma mater.

The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had seen the regiments of his illustrious lieutenants Nawab Mohsinul Mulk, Nawab Vikarul Mulk, Nawab Ishaque Khan, and had come into the hands of Nawab Mohammad Ali,

the last secretary of the Aligarh College, who had hardly any qualifications for this high office of great trust and responsibility. At this stage, rather earlier, the eminent English Professors and Scholars like Mr. Arnold and Mr. Said Morrison, who carried the reputation of Aligarh very high, had departed—even Mr. Toul, Mr. Goldie and Mr. Octorloney had left. The policy of Indianization of the staff had begun, and in this ambitious Ziauddin had an active hand—he being equally qualified as any European scholar or professor to be placed at the head of any department or the institution itself.

In those days Aligarh had another young rising barrister, Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, the future rival of Ziauddin. Both were trained in the same institution though the Pathan barrister was undoubtedly senior and had seen the last days of Sir Syed himself, in whose band he had worked as a junior pioneer, concentrating his activities more on the advancement of the Mohammedan Educational Conference and the 'Duty Society' than on the administration and education inside the College. Being a member of the free profession of law and a forceful and attractive speaker he was soon elected to the governing body of the Aligarh College, which sat in judgment over the staff and the administrative authorities. Aftab Ahmad Khan was a trustee of the College when Dr. Ziauddin was the Vice-principal, in a way, subordinate to him.

Aligarh is, so to say, the Mecca of the Indian Mussalmans (if I am allowed to use that expression) and all prominent Mussalmans of India have got to associate themselves with this organization and its activities, in some form or other, at some stage of their life. Without this no Muslim leader can either render any social, political or cultural service to this community. With the development of the Aligarh movement is linked the destiny of the Muslim nation in India.

Hence the Inter-national Muslim politician—the famous Agha Khan, the late Maharaja of Mahmudabad with Aftab Ahmad Khan and other prominent Mussalman leaders like the late Sir Mohammed Shafi and Sir Ali Imam secured a charter for the establishment of a University for the Mussalmans of India in the year 1921 when Lord Chelmsford was the Viceroy of India. Dr. Ziauddin was then the Principal of the Mohammedan Oriental College at Aligarh, and was soon to be its first Pro-Vice-Chancellor. Time was ripe for it and the governor of U. P., Sir Harcourt Butler, a fast friend of the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, had committed himself to the irresistible request of his friend for the grant and establishment of the University. The Maharaja was then the Home-member to the U. P. Government and the prime-mover for the immediate acceptance of the University Charter on terms which were not acceptable to the revolutionary extremist—Maulana Mohammed Ali, another brilliant and illustrious son of Aligarh and the second rival to Ziauddin, who was then studiously working his way to the Vice-Chancellorship of the future Muslim University of Aligarh.

The Muslim nation was flushed with the news when the Agha Khan and the other deputationists returned from Simla, prominent among them being the Maharaja of Mahamudabad and Aftab Ahmed Khan with the Charter of the Muslim University in their hands.

The Maharaja of Mahmudabad was appointed its first Vice-Chancellor and Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor. Ziauddin had been amply rewarded for his services by the Government of India with the title of the C. I. E. A rumour got circulated in the College then that he had saved the Muslim institution of Aligarh from the influence of the Non-Co-operators led by Mahatma Gandhi and

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad by getting the Ali Brothers arrested just at the opportune moment when Maulana Mohammed Ali was going to lead the Aligarh boys to abandon the University.

With one very powerful rival in Jail, whose disloyalty and extremism was injurious to the Aligarh University, Ziauddin was now busy establishing the Muslim University and carrying on its administration unhampered in his own way ; unexpectedly here he had to meet another more loyal, more influential but intellectually less equipped rival in the form of his own Vice-Chancellor, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad.

The Machiavalle spirit in him was dominant and the members of the first University Court who were mostly selected and nominated, or even elected, from amongst the men of his choice were one day summoned to declare that the first Vice-Chancellor was not wanted any more, hence honourably he should quit that high office. Ziauddin had triumphed. The Maharaja of Mahmudabad was defeated. Sir Harcourt Butler was no more the Governor of U. P. and the Maharaja of Mahmudabad was thrown out of office by the members of the University Court on the pretext that he was a devout 'Shia' and had come to the 'Sunni' University to destroy it from within. This was the magic charm and the members of the court were won over. They were shown that at Lucknow the Shia College had been established—the future rival of the Sunni University. The Maharaja of Mahmudabad was the chief patron of the Shia College, which under his patronage, in course of time, would be the future Shia University of India, as a rival to the Aligarh University. Dr. Ziauddin was a Sunni and was the saviour of the Sunni Mussalmans.

The Aligarhwallas had their day. The Nawab of Chhattari of Aligarh became the Home member of the U. P. Government,

and Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan was elected the Vice-Chancellor and Dr. Ziauddin continued to be the Pro-Vice-Chancellor. Yet he was accepting only half of the salary and giving the other half of it to the 'Duty society' to be given to the poor and deserving students by way of scholarship. Dr. Ziauddin was again a direct subordinate of the Pathan barrister. The lively meetings of the members of the University Court of that era were marked by the brilliant orations of the barrister Vice-Chancellor.

A new era had dawned in the life of the Aligarh boys. The new Vice-Chancellor was seen in the beautiful and grand Mosque of the University, himself calling the Azan of the morning prayer, and every student in the Syed Court hostel used to join him in the morning prayer. The Pathan was a zealous and devout Muslim and at the same time a man of action. The students were accustomed to the life-long, easy going habits of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor only to attend the Mosques on Fridays, otherwise very few of them were seen in the Mosque during the ordinary prayers. More so, in this they were encouraged by the reputation enjoyed by their Principal of the Aligarh College who offered his Jumma prayers at times, if it was necessary to show, without having the proper ablutions (i. e., wazoo) or cleanliness absolutely essential before offering prayers.

Between this pious and sincerely devout Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor having a contrary fame, a clash was inevitable. They began to disagree almost on everything in the day-to-day administration of the University, till the 50th Jubilee of the Aligarh University provided the occasion for it in the year 1926. The idea was conceived by the Vice-Chancellor, but the Pro-Vice-Chancellor wanted to take the real credit for making the show a great success. The Sahibzada had to

leave the show and sit in retirement. The energy as well as the organizational capacity of Ziauddin was remarkable. Within six days, working till 2 A.M. and personally attending to the smallest details, Ziauddin celebrated the 50th Jubilee with great pomp and show. The Vice-Chancellor was almost conspicuous by his absence after this event. A deadlock in the administration of the University was created. The late Maharaja of Mahmudabad said to the two delegates of the University when they went to invite him to attend the Golden Jubilee, "My boys, I would love to go to Aligarh, not once, but hundred times; but first drive that man Ziauddin from Aligarh who evicted me from the Institution on the false pretext that I was a Shia, and was out to destroy the Sunni University. Take it from me as long as that man does not succeed in driving out Aftab Ahmad Khan, who is a confirmed Sunni, and place himself in his seat, he would not sit content. No respectable man would like to associate himself with Aligarh till Ziauddin remains in power there."

How true were these prophetic words of the Maharaja ! For, within a month's time of this prophecy in the year 1926 the Sahibzada was out of office, and the same members of the University Court who were the supporters of Dr. Ziauddin gave almost a similar verdict against Aftab Ahmad Khan as they had given in the case of the Maharaja.

But the Pathan had another arrow in his quiver and he shot it. That is, soon after his resignation he wrote his famous note popularly called the Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan's Pamphlet, and sent its copies to the Government of India and the members of the court, and also made it public. This note contained grievous charges against the entire administration of the University, some members of the staff and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor particularly. The Government instituted an



inquiry with Sir Ibrahim Rahmatullah as its President. For about three months the enquiry went on in camera. A very large number of witnesses were examined from amongst the members of the University Court, the staff, the students, the old boys and the public. The most notable amongst the witnesses was the Dean of the Faculty of Theology. The President was heard using the phrase "Maulana Sahib, Apkay Khilaf Bhi Hamaray Pass Assihi nagufta behshikayatin hain, is-liyawjo sachi sacchi battain hain woh kahdiyyay warna ham majboor hongay keh apkay khilaf bhi aisihi Tahkikat ti Karrawai Jari Karayn."

The above incident was related in an informal meeting of the University staff by the Assistant Registrar of the University during the course of the inquiry of the University Commission.

Another important witness examined by the Committee was the Vice-president of the University Union, who was the representative of the students. His evidence was of such a character that it traced the record of the degeneration of Aligarh, its games, its institutions, its intellectual backwardness, all due to two main reasons, namely, nepotism and favouritism.

The Inquiry Committee had not finished its report when the author of the 'famous note' was paralyzed and lying as decrepit too, he was anxious to hear the results of the inquiry.

The Rahmatullah Committee finished its report and submitted the same to the Government of India. In the meantime Dr. Ziauddin had managed to get Nawab Sir Muzzamillab Khan elected as the Vice-Chancellor of the University. Hence the Nawab Sahib was summoned by Mr. Littlehales, the educational commissioner to the Government of India, to take the orders from Delhi on the basis of the findings of the Enquiry Committee.

The Report was deadly against Dr. Ziauddin and the Vice-Chancellor was asked to get the whole Report passed in toto in the meeting of the University Court without any dissent, else the report would be made public with all the proceedings and the entire evidence, which might prove much more damaging to the persons concerned.

The Vice-President of the Aligarh Students' Union had travelled in the same train in which the Vice-Chancellor went to Delhi and returned together to Aligarh. Thus the results of the Inquiry Committee had been known to the students and staff before the final decision by the University Court; but they awaited the result of the University Court, and as soon as this was announced a peculiar atmosphere was created in Aligarh. It was taken with a mixed feeling of gloom and pleasure. Those who had launched the prosecution were jubilant and a feeling of relief had come to them; now the University would be purged of the undesirable elements that have brought it to this stage of degradation, both moral and intellectual, and made the University the playground of their petty intrigue, personal bickerings, and mutual jealousies. This was the section of the discontented idealists, whereas, on the contrary, there was another larger group of the hard realists who had been undoubtedly benefitted by the man Ziauddin. For it may be borne in mind very clearly that Ziauddin was the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University and at the same time its humble peon. Aligarh University was Ziauddin and Ziauddin meant Aligarh College. The two were so intermingled that it was difficult to think of Aligarh without Dr. Ziauddin. Ziauddin had built two houses in Aligarh, so it was impossible to think that he would leave Aligarh. Every nook and corner of the Aligarh University had the impress of his personality. "Dr. Sahab" as he was popularly known there

could not be ousted from Aligarh. But a temporary departure from Aligarh was a blessing in disguise to him.

If Aligarh owes a great deal to Ziauddin, then he too in his turn owes almost everything to this institution and its boys. Thrice or four times the Aligarh boys migrated from the precincts of the University wall to the various villages in the western and southern districts of the U. P. for canvassing purpose, in order to capture votes for their popular Principal, then the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and finally the Vice-Chancellor. The elections of 1923-24 will remain memorable in the annals of the Aligarh University, when one Mr. Hazik, a very faithful and obedient lieutenant of Dr. Ziauddin had played a conspicuous part in the election campaign against the well-known Sherwani family of Aligarh that was Congress-minded. Tasaduk Ahmed Khan Sherwani and Khwaja Abdul Majeed, two well-known Barristers of Aligarh, and antagonists of Dr. Ziauddin in the political field of Aligarh, contested the elections of the Provincial and Central legislatures, but lost to this accurate and scientific calculator. The combined forces of the Congress with the personal influence of Moulana Mohammed Ali the great orator and Moulana Shaukat Ali the greatest Muslim organizer among the then living Mussalmans, proved futile against Dr. Ziauddin, when they were used to unseat him.

One has to admit that Ziauddin is a great fighter and has always fought the biggest men in his community, and had invariably come out successful. Ziauddin believes in the well-established motto that everything fair and foul is justified in love and war and life is a battle. He is an optimist, hardly complaining or crying. He is more a man of action, a realist and not a visionary. He was also a member of the Sadler Commission of Enquiry on the Calcutta University.

Dr. Ziauddin has remained in the Central Legislature for over an unbroken period of twenty years, and has added materially to the debates of the House. He is very strong in statistics and has always defeated the Government members whenever a question of facts and figures arose. In the earlier part of his career in the Central Legislature he devoted his energies mostly to the Indian Navy and Army matters and sat on the Sandhurst Committee for the establishment of the Military Academy at Dehradun. At the later stage of his activities in the Central Assembly, he became the spokesman of the Railway and Postal employees.

His speeches on the Budget were by far the best that any Mussalman legislator could do within this decade, so far as the statistics, accurate data and established facts were concerned ; but they were put in the Mathematician's language, without due regard to the correct use of the preposition or the tense. And they had their desired effect. Logic and argument, rhetoric and phraseology were left by Ziauddin for Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Moulana Mohammed Ali.

If the party meetings of the Central Legislature at times Jinnah found Ziauddin an enigma. Ziauddin sat with Abdullah Haroon and Mohammed Azhar Ali on the same cushioned seat in the Assembly Hall for about eight or ten years. Yet to both of them he remained an enigma. He is a great fighter for the Muslim employees of the various departments, and has been actually working for the full proportional representation of the Muslims in the services of the Government of India and in his own province.

After Mr. Mohammed Azhar Ali, he became the second secretary of the Muslim League party in the Central Assembly, and carried on his duties very efficiently. He also served as a very faithful lieutenant to Sir Abdur Rahim, while he was the

leader of the Independent Party in the Central Legislature, prior to Mr. Jinnah's leadership.

Ziauddin planned the election of Sir Abdur Rahim for the presidency of the Central Assembly and with his characteristic accuracy defeated Tassadak Ahmad Khan Sherwani, the then Congress nominee, when all the big guns of the Congress including Mahatma Gandhi, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and others were using their influence. Behind this masterly plan of the election campaign of Sir Abdur Rahim, Ziauddin had a personal motive. Sir Abdur Rahim realized what Ziauddin had done for him. After some time Ziauddin demanded the reward for his service. The President of the Central Legislature had to use his personal influence and that of his high office over the then Viceroy Lord Willingdon, to scrap the Rahmatullah Committee Report as the Lord Rector, and to reinstate Ziauddin at Aligarh—not as the Pro-Vice-Chancellor but as the Vice-Chancellor—the highest Executive and Administrative office in the University,—the most coveted place for which the great Indian mathematician had worked his destiny. Now that prize was at last within his grip.

Ziauddin returned to Aligarh after an absence of some years, when during his absence the grandson of Sir Syed himself, Ross Masood, had become the Vice-Chancellor and who tried to weed out the evils and uproot the deep roots of intrigue that had gone very deep into the soil of the Aligarh University life. Ross Masood was also the son-in-law of Aftab Ahmad Khan, and a great educationist with ability, tact, vision and sympathy—a fine gentleman, with admirable manners and grand style. He removed all the second class and third class men from the staff of the University and built the much desired Science college. He had great dreams of building the educational Taj at Aligarh. He was a visionary—and at times his words were

taken with a grain of salt by some members of the University Court. He once said when he entered the University that if he succeeded in throwing away the rubbish and filth gathered at Aligarh during the course of fifty years, then he would feel that his life's task was done. By rubbish and filth he meant the seeds of petty jealousy and intrigue, the favouritism and nepotism so rampant in the University. But as soon as Ross Masood applied his hand to these roots, he found himself stuck up and was going to fall a prey to the same evil, for without that, the members of the University Court, mostly Ziauddin's men, would not allow him to move a step.

By this time Ross Masood had been knighted by the Government but being persecuted by his father-in-law's sons and their friends, he felt that Ziauddin's hand was working from a great distance and he became disgusted with the whole affair and resigned. Another block from Ziauddin's path had been removed. But there came in a new young judge of the Allahabad High Court, Justice Sir Mohammad Suleman, who in spite of his onerous duties of the Chief Justice of the High Court at Allahabad, came to Aligarh every Saturday, to perform the duties of the Vice-Chancellor. The brilliance of Suleman and his administrative experience both created some impression of impartiality in the life of Aligarh. But he too could not root out the branches of the weed whose seeds had been sown by Ziauddin. He has been a real benefactor to his community, in the sense that he has fed, not in theory, not by public talks and public speeches on platform, but actually, the mouths of many young hungry Mussalman students and their families—once he was himself a poor student, who remembered the pangs of hunger.

A letter from Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, the Principal of the Aligarh College always brought a job without fail to any one

who carried it to any officer in the Government or semi-Government Departments.

The largest number of Deputy Collectors and Provincial Service Officers before the system of Public Service Examination was introduced, were invariably the nominees of Dr. Ziauddin. Persons all over the United Provinces particularly, and in many other provinces, who carried the 'Talisman' of Dr. Ziauddin's letter in their pockets, were guaranteed success.

On his return to Aligarh as Vice-Chancellor Ziauddin was knighted, and the world of Aligarh once more began to feel itself within its elements. All Vice-Chancellors felt themselves foreigners in Aligarh and the people of Aligarh including the students, the staff and the public of the city, realized that without Sir Ziauddin, the affairs of Aligarh, the sacred Trust of the Mussalmans of India, could not be safe in an outsider's hand, however high and exalted that person may be. Sir Ziauddin is a pure creation of Aligarh with whose name is associated the University.

Dr. Ziauddin married twice and has got one son called Zakauddin. As a social figure few people in India can claim a larger circle of personal friends than Sir Ziauddin and each year he takes an extensive tour to meet his various friends in the different provinces of India.

He is very fond of social functions and small parties. Though when he invites the college and school students to a dinner, sometimes he sends for their rations from the boarding house dining hall—yet his parties are very lively. His excursion trips are famous. He is also fond of shooting and utilizes his mathematical knowledge there also by calculating in his mind how the rifle bullet would make a parabola at an unknown range and strike the black buck.

## **EMINENT INDIANS**

**His absent-mindedness is proverbial in the college. They say all great men are like that and his absent-mindedness is thus condoned. Undoubtedly he is a great man.**

### **Books by Dr. Ziauddin**

**He has written only one book on the various systems of education in Europe consisting of about 2,000 pages. His note in the Sadler Committee Report on the Calcutta University Enquiry is of great educational value.**







Alenindia Nath Igore

## ABANINDRANATH TAGORE

( B. 1871—)

To the Tagores of Jorasanko in Calcutta, India, nay the whole world, is deeply in debt for its cultural enrichment and spiritual progress. Two of them in particular, Rabindranath and his nephew Abanindranath, by the loftiness of their creative genius, dwarfed other master-minds of their time and it is through them that India has carved a place for her own in the domain of world literature and art. The matchless melody of Rabindranath's poems and the unfathomable depth of their spiritual messages have placed Indian literature at the fore-front of the world of letters. Similarly has Abanindranath by the wonderful wizardry of his paint and brush been responsible for making the world of art conscious of "the message of Ind."

It was on August 7th 1871 that the future Father of Modern Indian Art first saw the light of day at the Jorasanko residence of his great grandfather prince Dwarkanath Tagore. Thus with his first breath he inhaled the rare fragrance of culture and refinement. Born in one of the most refined families in the world Abanindranath began to grow up in an environment that was at once sanctified by the teachings of the Upanishadas and enriched by the cultural accomplishments of the members of the family. Abanindranath was the youngest of the three sons of his father Goonendranath. Gaganendranath and Samarendranath were his elder brothers. Abanindranath's grandfather Girindranath and Rabindranath's father Maharsi Debendra Nath were two brothers—the two sons of Prince Dwarkanath.

In his boyhood Abanindranath was, as was the custom with the Tagores, reared up by servants and maid-servants. He was never a meek type of a boy, and his great curiosity made him, whenever he received presents of toys from his elders, break open everything to find out what there was inside the toys. His observer's eyes were thus being trained from his infancy. Nothing could easily escape his observing eyes—the many pictures that adorned his ancestral residence, particularly the pictures of gods and goddesses of "Sri Krishna," "Sakuntala", "Madanavasma" and "Kadambari" that were hung up on the walls of the room of his father's youngest sister fascinated him beyond description, and this fascination for pictures from Indian Mythology began to grow in his mind with his growth in age. This, coupled with the artistic talents that he inherited from his father Goonendranath who was an artist of repute, was developing in the boy Abanindranath a tendency towards painting. When he was about nine or ten years old the family moved to a garden-house by the side of the Ganges and at a distance of nearly fifteen miles from Calcutta. It was a peaceful garden-house. The flowers, the fruits, the birds that added to the beauty of the garden-house would inspire the future artist to paint them. With pen and ink and paper would the boy artist sit down to delineate these things of beauty, and the resultant pictures showed glimpses of his future greatness.

But he was never an ideal school boy. When he was first sent to school to learn the three R's, the awful appearance of the teacher and his cane made him dislike the school and its teaching with all the bitterness in the little boy's heart. However he had not to stay long there—one day for disobeying the teacher he was mercilessly whipped by that minion of the goddess of learning. When Abanindranath's father was

apprised of this merciless treatment to his son, he made him leave the school and made appropriate arrangements for the teaching of his son at home ; all the knowledge that Abanindranath has acquired, and his is not an insignificant acquisition, he has done as a result of his being taught at home.

However when he was thus engaged in learning all that may be learnt from books he had not given up his old pastime of painting pictures. On the other hand, he was learning more and more about painting. His father Goonendranath was as we have mentioned elsewhere an artist of renown ; his uncle Jyotindranath was a well-known portrait-painter, his eldest brother Gaganendranath who in later years became a master-artist was at that time learning at the St. Xavier's School—all their examples and the inherent artistic talents of Abanindranath were responsible for the growth of this tendency in him. When he grew up to be a youngman, the famous Italian Signor Gulhardi who was at that time the Vice-principal of the Government Art School took upon himself the task of teaching Abanindranath the mysteries of European Art and within a very short time he was able to teach Abanindranath portrait-painting and oil painting, but everything after the European style. It was at that time that the reputed English artist Mr. Palmer came to India from England and Abanindranath began taking lessons from him in water-colour and oil-painting. But the art of Europe with all its fascinating beauty and wonderful colour wizardry could not sufficiently fill the young artist's heart. The world of reality, the world of flesh and blood, of colour and sunshine, the world of our daily experiences, which European Art was leading Abanindranath to, was not the world that the young artist used to dream of—his dream-world was something strange yet haunting, it was a world where unreality was more real than the reality that

surrounds us. His was a world of ideas and not of forms, and it was ideas that he yearned to translate into pictures and not forms of ordinary men and women, trees and plants, cloud and sunshine. But European Art could not give him an inkling of this world of his dreams ; consequently, with every advance that he was making in the domain of European Art he was getting more and more restless, more and more dissatisfied. To make things worse there occurred an incident at this time that made Abanindranath really sick of the European style of painting. One day Mr. Palmer told Abanindra that there was nothing more that Mr. Palmer could teach him. The only thing that Abanindranath was yet to learn was human anatomy in all its details. Mr. Palmer then brought him a dead man's head and ordered him to paint it. But the sight of that head was making Abanindranath literally sick. Mr. Palmer on the other hand insisted on his painting it. Abanindranath somehow finished that and returned home with a high temperature. When he recovered he gave up going to Mr. Palmer for a long time. But soon a desire to paint landscapes was gaining the upperhand in his mind, and he again went to Mr. Palmer who was struck dumb by the mastery of Abanindranath in landscape-painting. But the dissatisfaction that there was in the mind of Abanindranath was increasing. The restlessness born out of his inability to achieve the desired was quite maddening. Happily for India and her art, the genius of Abanindranath one day found out by accident the door of the treasure-house for which he had so long been groping in vain. In his big ancestral library he came across an old manuscript of paintings of the Mughal age. The paintings at once opened before the artist's eyes the treasure-house of Indian Art. Gone now was all the restlessness, all the dissatisfaction that had so long been disturbing the peace of his mind. The messages of the

Upanishadas, the patriotic upbringing of the young mind, the political situation of India at that time—all had helped to render the young artist's mind a fit receptacle for the beautiful in everything Indian, particularly in Indian Art. At about the same time he received as a present a book of Persian paintings from his brother-in-law Sheshendu. Abanindranath was taken aback by the wonderful design of the court-room of Indra, the Lord of gods.

Abanindranath had found what he desired. With singular zeal and earnestness he set himself to the task of reviving Indian Art—the Art that had so long remained hidden in the caves of Ajanta and Ellora, in the paintings of the Mughal age. He began his famous series of Radha Krishna pictures of Indian style. All the pioneer's spade-work he had to do by himself as there was no one who could strictly be called his fore-runner in the field of Indian Art. True, Annada Bagchi, a disciple of H. H. Lock, Principal, School of Industrial Art (1880), attempted before Abanindranath to revive Indian Art but through Western idealism. He tried to see Indian Art through the eyes of his Western Guru without understanding the spirit and the deep significance of the Indian Art, and as such, he cannot be called a revivalist of Indian Art in the sense Abanindranath is called. Not can the famous Ravi Varma who once, when Abanindranath was young, visited the young artist's studio and predicted a great future for him, be called Abanindranath's precursor in the domain of Indian Art. Ravi Varma, it is true, drew pictures from Hindu Mythology; but he was never a true devotee of Indian Art. He borrowed subjects from Hindu Mythology simply because they were demanded by the public and fetched high market-value. The man who set the ball of revivalism rolling was none other than Abanindranath.

When Abanindranath was about thirty-three he fortunately met Mr. Havell—a true friend of Indian Art. He was at that time Principal of the Government School of Art, and, when he came to know Abanindranath he could not but appreciate the creative genius of the young Bengali artist. It was after repeated requests from Mr. Havell that Abanindranath accepted the post of the Vice-principal of the Government School of Art. Abanindranath did not accept the post for monetary reasons, because money he had enough. He was prompted by the desire to serve Indian Art on a vaster scale and to leave behind him followers to complete his task and that is why he became the Vice-principal, later, Principal of the Government School of Art.

Europe soon came to recognise Abanindranath as a master artist of the world. He was hailed as the harbinger of Renaissance of Indian Art in all its branches—painting, sculpture and architecture. Sir William Rothenstein, the famous Japanese Okakura, the well-renowned archaeologist and artist Nicholas Roerich, Karl Mikoff the Pole, and the Norwegian Artist Madsen, to name only a few, offered their respects to this great Indian artist. His achievements in the world of painting of which it is impossible to give full details here have earned unstinted praise from all quarters of the civilized world. His "Bharat Mata", "Passing of Shah Jehan", "Shah Jehan's Dream", "Asoka's Queen", and "Alamgir" are monumental creations of the master-mind. They can favourably be compared with the best artistic productions of the world. But painting does by no means exhaust the versatility of his genius. His "Bageswari Lectures" will for all time be regarded as the most valuable series of lectures delivered on art-literature and art-criticism. That he is a litterateur of no mean order will be proved by his numerous pieces of juvenile literature.



His "Sakuntala", "Kshirer Putul", "Rajkahini", "Bhut-patnir Desh" are sources of everlasting joy to the young minds of Bengal. The lucidity of style, the sweetness of expression and above all the graphicaity of the descriptions, all mark him out as a literary confectioner whose only business is to cater sweets to the young boys and girls of the province.

He is a brilliant conversationalist too. Whoever has come in contact with him could not but be charmed by his affability and warm-heartedness.

He is very much interested in music ; although he cannot sing well, he can play charmingly on the Veena, the Sitar, and the Esraj. He is an artist even in stage-decorations and it was mainly due to his wonderful achievement of effect in stage decoration that many of Rabindranath's dramatic performances attained success. Abanindranath was a very brilliant comic actor in his days. Even Girishchandra Ghose, the Garrick of the Indian Stage, was once heard to exclaim in reference to Abanindranath's histrionic abilities and such a praise when it comes from no less a man than Girishchandra, speaks volumes of the dramatic talents of the great artist.

Abanindranath has left painting but his creative genius is still active. He now busies himself in securing pebbles, broken twigs and such other things and in arranging them in such a way that they look like real toys. Things that we neglect while walking in the streets are carefully got together and arranged by the great artist and when we go near him and see those things we find the greatness of his creative genius, the keenness and the appreciativeness of his observing eyes.

Such is Abanindranath the "Father of Modern Indian Art." Far from the madding crowd and the ignoble strife of this world of realism lives the artist in the land of his dreams—the land of beauty and joy supreme.

**Books by Abanindranath Tagore**

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Bageswari Silpa Prabandhabali          | (in Bengali) |
| 2. Banglar Brata                          | "            |
| 3. Buro Pugla                             | "            |
| 4. Bharat Silpa                           | "            |
| 5. Bhut-patnir Desh                       | "            |
| 6. Chitrakshar                            | "            |
| 7. " Gharoa                               | "            |
| 8. Jorasankor Dhare                       | "            |
| 9. Khatanchir Khata                       | "            |
| 10. Kshirer Putul                         | "            |
| 11. Pathe Bipathe                         | "            |
| 12. Priya Darshika                        | "            |
| 13. Nalak                                 | "            |
| 14. Rajkahini                             | "            |
| 15. Sakuntala                             | "            |
| 16. Sadanga                               | "            |
| 17. Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy | (in English) |





Dr Syamaprasad Mookerjee

## SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE

( B. 1901— )

To be born with a silver spoon in the mouth is no doubt a privilege. It does not necessarily mean any great responsibility for the person born. But to be born of an illustrious father is not only a good fortune but a heavy responsibility. To carry on the tradition of greatness is a difficult task. With rare exceptions sons and daughters of great men and women disappoint us.

For three generations the Mookerjees have kept up their tradition of good name in Bengal. Symaprasad's grandfather Gangaprasad was an eminent man of his time. Though a medical practitioner he was much interested in education. His zeal for learning was inherited by his son—Asutosh, whose fame for erudition has become a byword in Bengal. He was not only a great scholar, but an eminent jurist and an educationist. For many years Asutosh was at the helm of the affairs of the University of Calcutta. His ardour for the advancement of learning and his courage of conviction proved to be the greatest impetus behind all educational reforms in the province. Of such a noble father Symaprasad was born in July, 1901. He is the second son of the Late Asutosh Mookerjee—the eldest son Ramaprasad is now a leading member of the Calcutta Bar.

Syamaprasad was educated at the Mitra Institution, Bhowanipur and Presidency College, Calcutta. He graduated in 1921 and passed the M. A. Examination in 1923.

At the early age of twenty-three Syamaprasad was elected a Fellow of the Calcutta University. Since then he has been intimately connected with the affairs of the University. He was

not only a member of the deliberative bodies of the University but he actively participated in post-graduate teaching as a lecturer in the University Law College. He was appointed a lecturer in 1924 and he continued in that position up to August 1936, when he resigned from that post.

Syamaprasad was enrolled as an Advocate of the Calcutta High Court in 1924. In 1927 he was called to the Bar in London. He was elected a member of the Bengal Legislative Council as a Congress candidate in 1929. He tendered his resignation according to the mandate of the Congress during the Non-co-operation movement. He was, however, re-elected a member of the Council in 1930. Syamaprasad lost his wife—Shrimati Sudha Devi in August, 1933.

In August 1934 Syamaprasad was appointed the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University. Asutosh would have been delighted to see his son carrying on the work begun by him. It was perhaps the ambition of the son to step into his father's shoes. It must have gratified him that the fulfilment of his cherished hope came so soon in life. For four years Syamaprasad presided over the destinies of the Calcutta University. From what he did during his tenure of office it may confidently be said that the choice was not misplaced. Undoubtedly, he had a good passport to the affairs of the University. That he could make the best of the opportunity proves that he has inherited some of the adorable qualities of his late father. By his ability he has proved that greatness was not thrust upon him.

The cool, calm academic atmosphere of the University could not satisfy him for a long time and he launched into the troubled waters of the intriguing politics of Bengal. The Hindus in Bengal were smarting under various grievances. He thought that the heterogeneous Congress had betrayed the cause of the

Hindus in general and specially of the Hindus in Bengal. The Hindu Mahasabha, for the time being, gained popularity with Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee as the leader. He became the Working President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha.

Dr. Mookerjee joined the Progressive Coalition Party under the leadership of Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq. He was the Finance Minister of Bengal during 1941-42. He resigned due to difference of opinion with the Governor of Bengal.

In 1943 Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee was elected the President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha. He was also the President of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal during 1943-44.

He has been returned unopposed to the Bengal Legislative Assembly from the Calcutta University constituency in the year 1946.

Such in brief outlines are some of the important dates in the life of the 45-year-old Syamaprasad Mookerjee. His life has not yet unfolded itself fully. Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee is now at the threshold of maturity and many things can be expected of him. Time is not yet ripe for writing an estimate of his career. He is still moulding it. In politics sometimes unexpected and unusual things happen. It is difficult to foresee the position he will take in the shifting scenes of politics. Tremendous political changes are likely to sweep over India. Adjustments in political allegiance will be inevitable.

Even during this brief space of life Dr. Mookerjee has left a deep impression on the life of Bengal. He is still working and as such whatever estimate we may make of him will be tentative. His achievements may widely be grouped under the following headings namely, educational, political and social.

**Educational :** Dr. Mookerjee first won his recognition as an educationist. Entering the University Executive very early in life he has served and is still serving the University of Calcutta

in innumerable capacities. He has served his Alma Mater as a Lecturer, as a Fellow, as a Syndic, as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, as the President of the Post-Graduate Council of Teaching in Arts and as the Vice-Chancellor of the University for four years from 1934-38. This list is by no means exhaustive. There is hardly any department of the University administration which has not claimed his attention. It is certainly a tribute to his dominating personality. But it has also invited some unkind criticism. However indispensable his guidance might have been, a section of the educated people felt there was too much domination by an individual. Benevolent despotism, they thought, was not good even in an educational institution.

Dr. Mookerjee has rendered a great service to the University of Calcutta as its Vice-Chancellor from 1934-38. In his four Convocation Addresses he has given us an estimate of the work done by the University under his regime. At the end of his first year of Vice-Chancellorship he could report that after fourteen years of striving the University had decided upon a course of remodelling the Matriculation examination. The regulations embodied some far-reaching changes.

The principal address at the Convocation in 1937 was delivered by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore in Bengali. It was a departure from the age-old custom. Dr. Mookerjee had the proud privilege of inviting the poet to address the Convocation. Next year the Convocation was addressed by Dinabandhu C. F. Andrews. In 1938 Dr. Mookerjee could announce the creation of two useful institutions, namely, the Art Museum and the Appointments Board.

His deep attachment to the University found expression in his Convocation address on the 2nd of March, 1935 :—

“Standing in the very place which is sanctified by the



memory of one whom I cannot think without the deepest feelings of affection and reverence, to, whom I owe my life and all and to whom this University owes its greatness and eminence—standing on this sacred spot, to me there is nothing nobler, nothing greater than to be afforded an opportunity of serving the truest interests of my Alma Mater and my country. With you I pray, and pray fervently, that the University may for ever be pledged to discover and disseminate truth in every realm, to train men in openness of mind and law of truth and freedom, to inculcate right ideals, to develop personalities capable of the largest participation in the good of life and the largest service to our beloved motherland.”

Political and Social : It is difficult to give an estimate of a politician's life. There are so many conflicting elements in politics that ordinary people lose themselves in the labyrinth. Dr. Mookerjee was first returned to the Bengal Legislative Council as a Congress candidate. This year he has been elected unopposed to the Bengal Legislative Assembly from the University constituency as a nominee of the Hindu Mahasabha. He has changed his allegiance and has become the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha. Undoubtedly, the Mahasabha is a communal organisation and as such Dr. Mookerjee may be called a leader of a section of the people. Curiously enough, his utterances and activities do not always seem to be as communal as could be expected of a Hindu leader. He is more national than communal. Dr. Mookerjee is not just the counterpart of Mr. Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League. In his address as President of the Bilaspur Conference (24th December, 1944) of the All India Hindu Mahasabha he said,

“I cannot conceive of any narrow and sectional communalism in any organisation supported by Hindus which genuinely aspires to see their country freed from foreign domination. The

interests of Hindus are identical with those of the nation itself. Hindus want their country to be politically free.' They recognise that their country has been the home of many sects and religions and they are anxious that there should be a common right of citizenship for one and all. They stand for one undivided India."

That he could shed communal considerations and work for the welfare of the country as a whole was exemplified by his participation in the Progressive Coalition Party under the leadership of Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq. But as soon as he felt that he could not continue as a Minister consistent with national interests he resigned. In a statement before the Bengal Legislative Assembly on the 12th February, 1943 Dr. Mookerjee said—

"I felt compelled to resign first, because I found that the continued policy of the British Government in this country was to ignore the claims of Indians to fuller political power, to hamper good Government consistent with the true interests of the people and to weaken the forces of people's defence, against enemy aggression."

In that memorable statement he has brought into light the absurdities of the present constitution. He said,

"Indian Ministers are trotted out as Mr. Amery's show-boys when foreign public opinion is to be soothed as regards the grand appearance of provincial autonomy in India. The world is reminded that the destinies of millions of Indians are in the hands of Indian Ministers responsible to the legislature. The fact however is that while ministers have larger responsibilities and have to justify the conduct and administrative acts of themselves and of irresponsible bureaucrats before the legislature and the public, they have very little of real power which lies vested in the autocratic hands of the Governor of the province concerned. And the Governor has at his beck and call the services of a small coterie of unsympathetic and

unimaginative Civil Servants, utterly oblivious of the real interests of the people of the province."

Dr. Mookerjee thus bravely pointed out the mockery of this Provincial Autonomy. Finding himself helpless in giving his people the necessary redress after the terrible cyclone over Midnapore in October 1942 he resigned from his office as Minister. Throughout 1943 and 1944 he organised relief on an immense scale. That will form a glorious chapter of Dr. Mookerjee's life. He toured throughout the province organising relief and rehabilitation. In his book—'Panchaser Manvantvar' Dr. Mookerjee has analysed the utter inefficiency and callousness of the Government in handling the situation. The maladministration of the province which resulted in the death of millions has been vehemently denounced by Dr. Mookerjee in his speeches at different places.

Dr. Mookerjee was intimately connected with the Bengal Relief Committee and the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha Relief Committee. These two Committees attracted donations to the extent of crores of rupees in cash and kind. Bengal will remember with gratitude the splendid service rendered by Dr. Mookerjee at one of the most critical phases of her history.

Dr. Mookerjee is now 45 years of age. Bengal fondly hopes that he will come out of communal politics and harness his indomitable courage and selfless service to the cause of the country in a wider political background.

### **Books by Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee**

1. The Bengali Theatre.
2. Awake Hindustan !
3. 'Panchaser Manvantvar'.
4. A Phase of Indian Struggle.

# SRI AUROBINDO GHOSE

( B. 1872—

“Feel your strength, train your strength in the struggle with violence and by that strength, hold down the roof of the temple.”

—Aurobindo.

In May 1909 a Bengali stood in the prisoner's dock at Alipore Court while a young Englishman delivered the judgment. This was one of life's little ironies ; for the accused had competed with his judge in the Civil Service Examination some nineteen years ago in England and beaten his rival in Greek. He has since been hailed, in the East as in the West, 'as one of the highest spiritual forces in the World',<sup>1</sup> 'a great example of the intellectual robustness of mystic souls',<sup>2</sup> while his judge—well, he has taken his wages and is gone. Aurobindo's life sums up in itself the reawakening of Bengal.

The great Deshbandhu Das had, as Aurobindo's counsel of defence, prophesied world-fame for him in memorable words at a time when our Province, at once the heart and brain of India, was slowly and painfully emerging from the troubles of Swadeshi. Rabindranath Tagore did him homage later on in a glorious poem, “Aurobindo, Rabindra's homage accept.”<sup>3</sup>. Today we salute this spare, cool, almost fragile man with the two most wonderful eyes in the world as a poet, scholar, fighter and saint. Steeped in his beatitude Aurobindo is not beside us ; but he has always been, and still is, with us.

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1. Romain Rolland.

2. S. Radhakrishnan.

3. English Translation by K. C. Sen in Dilip Roy's 'Among the Great'. [P. P. 204-206]





Aurobindo was born in Calcutta on August 15, 1872. His father, Dr. Krishnadhan Ghose, was a man of genial temperament who radiated warmth and light wherever he moved. Like all educated Bengalis of the nineteenth century, he was an incorrigible Anglophil. Early in his life he went to England, qualified for the Indian Medical Service and returning home, set up a very successful practice.

Dr. Krishnadhan Ghose wanted to train up his boys in the true English fashion. So Aurobindo was sent to St. Paul's School, Darjeeling. In 1879 the seven years old Aurobindo and his nine years old brother, Manomohan, were packed off to England. The two brothers were placed under the care of an English family at Manchester where they were privately educated. Later on they were put to St. Paul's School, London, where little Manomohan had startled his classmate, Lawrence Binyon, with this quotation from Shakespeare :

"Mislike me not for my complexion,

The shadowed livery of the burnished Sun."

Besides St. Paul's, however, the boys had to learn in the school of hardship. For their father's knowledge of the World had always been less than his professional income and his charity always greater. Irregular remittance brought them rather irregular means. But herein we may trace the finger of Destiny and be thankful ; for a father's worldly wisdom might have robbed us of a great man and a great teacher.

In 1890 Aurobindo took the Indian Civil Service Examination, stood first in Greek and failed in the riding test. We cannot tell with any certainty what a little more of horsemanship would have made of him.

Aurobindo inherited from his mother's father, Rajnarayan Bose, a spirit of renunciation and an intense God-consciousness. Rajnarayan Bose is quite an outstanding figure of our renaissance.

ance. He wrote pamphlets on the superiority of Hinduism, instituted Societies for the preservation and propagation of national culture and stressed the importance of physical training for our youngmen. The old man was frankly disappointed in his Anglicized son-in-law ; but his spirit must have been well pleased in his far-famed grandson, Aurobindo Ghose.

Aurobindo was lucky to win a scholarship and immediately after his failure at the Civil Service Examination, he joined King's College, Cambridge. In 1892 he graduated with first class in Classical Tripos and did not have to wait long for any opening. He had already attracted the notice of the young Gaikwar, who was then in England, and soon left for India as his personal assistant.

Manomohan, who had joined Christ Church College, Oxford, and devoted himself passionately to the Classical Greats and writing poetry, also sailed for home and ended by becoming Professor of Literature at Presidency College, Calcutta.

With his arrival at Baroda, Aurobindo turned over a new leaf. He was little more than a stranger in his own land. From now on he was slowly to pick up old, almost forgotten ties, to strike his spiritual roots deeper into his native soil and so prepare for the spring. Thus his twelve years at Baroda was something more than a period of hibernation ; it was rather one of incubation. These twelve years also made him sufficiently aware of the distinction between the East and the West. By a silent yet effective contrast with the Indian scene, European civilization began to appear to him as something callow and harsh. He was already enabled to write : "—the material civilization of Europe, unless spiritualised, must before long petrify and perish."

At Baroda Aurobindo wrote at least as much as he read. It was here that he wrote the bulk of his collected poems and



plays, in itself no light achievement. Yet Baroda was no bed of roses and Aurobindo came in for his due share of drudgery. The confidential personal assistant to the Gaekwar was first switched on to the Revenue Office ; next the Revenue Officer was made private secretary to His Highness ; finally the private secretary turned Vice-Principal of the State College. Metamorphosis indeed ! But sevenhundred and fifty a month in 1905 must be declared a handsome salary. Still a fat salary and a fiery soul go ill together and when the call of Swadeshi sounded, Aurobindo left his post, came home and entered the lists.

Swadeshi—what a world of memories, hopes and fears, of blood, toil, tear and sweat does this single word bring to a Bengali :

“Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,

But to be young was very heaven.”

Lord Curzon, that brilliant Pro-consul, had challenged our manhood by making the partition of Bengal a settled fact. Rabindranath Tagore wandered through the Province singing his people to ardour and sacrifice : while Surendranath Banerjee had already thundered the command : the settled fact must be unsettled.

On August 7, 1905, Bengal completely boycotted British goods under the severest bureaucratic repression. Political slogans were banned, students were forbidden to join any kind of demonstration, public meetings were ruthlessly broken up by the Police. . The district of Backergunge did splendid work and naturally came in for its share of attention from the Executive. The small town of Barisal virtually passed under the hand of the Military and the Provincial Conference, which met there in March 1905 was dispersed under a heavy charge of batons. Volunteers and delegates broke their heads and Surendranath

Banerjee, prosecuted for contempt of court, was fined two hundred rupees. Aurobindo, who had come to study the Bengal situation at first hand, was present at this Conference.

Aurobindo left Baroda for good in July 1906 and came down to settle in Calcutta. A most happy decision. For the partition of Bengal was merely an arresting phase of the new movement which was sweeping our country. Swadeshi is, in the last analysis, a rebirth. Nothing more, nothing less than that. In collision with the West we had suddenly become conscious of our separate identity as a nation. The spiritual urge to know and be ourselves shot through and transformed every department of Bengali life. The time-spirit produced those titans of thought and action who are an abiding glory to our people. It is not for nothing that Gokhale used to remark, "What Bengal thinks to-day, the rest of India thinks to-morrow" (and he might have added, "what Bengal did yesterday the rest of India will do day-after-to-morrow".)

To the growing light Aurobindo was destined to add one more ray. He became at once the fighter and philosopher of this new movement. His creed has been beautifully stated by a Bengali writer : "To realise God is the mission of man ; we can realise Him only by fulfilling ourselves in our individual and national life ; in order to fulfil our national life, we must realise our separateness as a people and we can best realise our separateness by being Swadeshi in all departments of human activity."

In Bengal Aurobindo's work was patterned for him. The National Council of Education was formed in November 1905 to provide a sort of a rest-house to those students who had been expelled from Government Schools and Colleges on political grounds. But the Council passed beyond its immediate objective and undertook the overhauling and repair of national

education. The official education, controlled by the hoary bureaucracy towards political ends, was absurdly unreal. It was excessively literary, was imparted through a foreign medium and, what was worse, precisely calculated to kill in our youth all appreciation of Indian culture. The Council decided to counteract these evils by setting up a National College in Calcutta of which Aurobindo became the first Principal. The National College was to promote education, scientific and liberal, on national lines. But Aurobindo's ideals were much too vast ("To actualise the deepest God-consciousness of human life in the outer life and appointments of man") and could hardly be packed into the narrow act of the National College, which drifted on till Subhas Bose, another Cantabrigian, took over its Principalship in 1921.

A wider avenue, however, opened to Aurobindo in 1907 when the Nationalist party decided to finance and conduct the newly founded daily paper 'Bande Mataram'. Aurobindo became its editor and virtual director and it immediately leapt into popularity, which it retained throughout its very brief existence. 'Bande Mataram' is easily a milestone in Indian journalism; courage, fervour, patriotism, industry, information, intellect—everything flowed into its service. And it helped not a little to shape the political thought of Bengal. If Bepin Chandra Pal and Brahma Bandhab Upadhyay made it possible, Aurobindo, ably assisted by Sham Sundar Chakravarty, actually nourished it into an influential organ.

'Bande Mataram' transformed Aurobindo from an admired name into a recognised leader. He was prosecuted for sedition and, while he was still under trial, Bepin Chandra Pal was clapped into prison and Brahma Bandhab Upadhyay died. The trial had only served to increase his popularity and the

removal of these two colleagues made the people look up to him as their only leader.

In November 1907 Aurobindo joined the Midnapore District Conference where occurred the first hitch between the Moderates and the Nationalists. The rupture was completed in the Surat Congress in the same year. After the dissolution of Surat Congress, Aurobindo toured extensively in Bombay and Central Provinces, lecturing on Nationalism at all important centres. In January 1908 he returned to Calcutta only to be dragged into the Alipore conspiracy case a few months later. He was suspected in connexion with the bomb explosion at Muzafferpore, which killed two English women on April 30 and he was arrested on May 2.

This Alipore trial was not without its thrills. One of the thirty-nine accused turned approver and was murdered by two of his fellow accused; these two were subsequently hanged. Then the man assisting the Government Prosecutor was shot dead. Deshbandhu Das spoke for eight days and on April 18, 1909, the Assessors declared Aurobindo not guilty on all the charges. A month later Mr. Justice Beachcroft delivered his judgment agreeing with the Assessors' findings. Aurobindo was released on May 6 more than a year after his arrest. He retired that very evening to the house of his uncle, Krishna Kumar Mitra.

## V.

• On his release Aurobindo tried to revive the Nationalist Party which dragged on a very thin existence. Prominent members had been removed by death, deportation and imprisonment; everything was at sixes and sevens. Aurobindo worked in high gear; he spoke, wrote and organised. He started two weeklies, *Karmayogin* in English and *Dharma* in Bengali. For

a time he thought that the extremist tone of the party might be softened down to suit the times ; but at last he was forced to recognize that the people were not prepared for that either.

Aurobindo clearly saw that he was not destined for further politics. Moreover his practice of *yoga* during his one year detention at Alipore had confirmed him in a contemplative life. An imperious urge of the spirit forced him to retire to Chandernagore, in February 1910, and next April he sailed for Pondichery in South India where he found an invaluable friend in M. Paul Ritcher.

In his absence a third prosecution was launched in Calcutta against Aurobindo for a signed article in *Karmayogin* ; but it failed. After four years at Pondichery he started a philosophical monthly, *Arya*, in which appeared the bulk of his more important writings. Now he finally severed all connexions with politics and repeatedly refused the Presidential Chair of the National Congress. From 1910 to this day he has remained in his cloister devoting himself to his spiritual task without intermission.

## VI

Aurobindo's life is a study in development. There is no interruption, no discord. It has the strange harmony of an orchestra with its subtle yet deliberate involutions. To hold, as some do, that Aurobindo's failure in the riding test was responsible for his subsequent public activities, that with a little more horsemanship he could have, like Mr. Beachcroft, annexed the mystic letters I. C. S. to his name and become a terror to his people, is entirely to misread the inner man. For we all know that he did not want to rust in a princely post at Baroda with so much success to look forward to, and

that when the bugle of Swadeshi sounded, he leapt from his scabbard like Arthur's sword.

It is similarly wrong to hold that Aurobindo's subsequent adoption of spiritual life is just a reaction against frustration. But Aurobindo never divorced politics from the spirit, although he is far too clear-sighted to have confused the two as all false prophets tend to do. Spiritual life is for a man as fiercely intellectual as Aurobindo, a most natural, almost inevitable consummation. He did not take to it as a means of escape or of personal salvation. He took to it to transform this material world into the divine. In a beautiful letter to Desbandhu Das he declared: "I have become confirmed in a perception which I had always, less clearly and dynamically then, but which has now become more and more evident to me, that the true basis of work and life is the spiritual...I have still to remain in retirement. For I am determined not to work in the external field till I have the sure and complete possession of this new power of action not to build except on a perfect foundation."

Aurobindo's spiritual task is nothing short of the marriage of Heaven and Earth. Man must first ascend to the Divine and then descend to matter to transform it. He is no Sankara dismissing the world as illusion; but another Ramakrishna embracing it as "the divine sport. There is thus no room for escapism in his philosophy which he had stated as far back as the days of Swadeshi: "To actualise the deepest God-consciousness of human life in the outer life and appointments of man".

Aurobindo has threshed three classics besides several modern languages, enjoys jokes as much from Bernard Shaw as from Anatole France and heartily pays them back. He could have become the greatest literary figure of Bengal after

Rabindranath Tagore, for he writes Bengali with intense grace and poise. He could have become a great metaphysician, the very greatest in contemporary India. He could have become our first leader in Politics. But Aurobindo has chosen to renounce everything for the sake of his Promethean vision which he celebrates in triumphant poetry.

"Rose of God, vermillion stain on the sapphires of heaven,  
Rose of Bliss, fire-sweet, seven-tinged with the Ecstasies seven !  
Leap up in our heart of human-hood, O miracle, O flame,  
Passion-flower of the Nameless, bud of the mystical Name,  
Rose of God, great wisdom-bloom on the summits of being,  
Rose of Light immaculate core of the ultimate seeing !  
Live in the mind of our earth-hood, O golden mystery flower,  
Sun on the head of the Timeless, guest of the marvellous hour."

**Books by Sri Aurobindo Ghose.**

1. The Brain of India.
2. The Renaissance in India.
3. Bankim—Dayananda—Tilak.
4. Ideal and Progress.
5. The Superman.
6. A System of National Education.
- 7. Kalidasa.
8. The Mother.
9. Essays on the Geeta.
10. Heraclitus.
11. The Life Divine.
12. The National Value of Art.
13. Collected Poems and Plays.
14. Bases of Yoga.
15. Lights on Yoga.

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  - 4. Sri Aurobindo : A homage—Tan Yun Shan and Sisir  
Kumar Maitra. •
  5. The Malady of the Century—Nalini Kanta Gupta.
  6. Sri Aurobindo—K. B. S. Iyengar.
  7. Among the Great—Dilip Kumar Roy.
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## PROFESSOR MEGHNAD SAHA, F. R. S.

( B. 1882— )

The name of Saha has become a proverb ; it is the synonym of the clearance of an Augean Stable. The position of Stellar spectroscopy just after the World War I was one of a heap of data with no logical link to unify these into a coherent chain. With a stroke of insight he cleared the whole field and showed the scientific world a new path to march on for the restless souls in their eternal quest for the unknowable. The response that men of science like Mithe, Russel, Fowler (R. H.) gave to the then young scholar was amazing and magical. Again today we are face to face with a similar state of affairs in a different problem though not quite unconnected with the former. It is the problem of the solar atmosphere comparing the complexity of the whole situation regarding 'Solar Physics' with the previous one. Professor Hunter of Royal Observatory, Greenwich, concludes : "Another Saha may explain the facts with equally satisfactory results". But the same Saha has again come to the rescue, the venture this time is bolder still ; on the previous occasion he married spectroscopy to thermodynamics both of which are the oldest branches of physics, but now he married old spectroscopy to the newly born nuclear physics. It is not fair to make any comment on the outcome at this stage because much remains to be done to give shape and form to the highly original idea he has advanced. Both the occasions bring to bold relief the two most prominent characteristics of Professor Saha. He sets his hand where others have failed and then like an essentially true scientist he never

pushes his theory to extremes. As such his name is invoked whenever some new light is needed to clear the mist and then having offered he leaves behind a blazing trail for others to glow in it.

Meghnad Saha was born in the year 1882 in a village of Dacca District. He is the son of Late Jogendranath Saha. He had his school education in Kishorilal Jubilee School, Dacca. As a school boy he was of a bookish type and considered by other fellows as unsocial. The story goes that while a boy, he went to offer flowers to Saraswati, the goddess of learning, but the high-priest prevented him on grounds peculiar to the priest-craft of India. The eminence to which he has risen as a foremost votary in the shrine of the goddess of learning may have been caused by the boy's sub-conscious desire to wipe out the shame which he had suffered in the face of society. The same incident may account for his sub-conscious make-up as a great iconoclast. But being too intelligent he has transferred his hatred from idolatory to medievalism. He remains occupied as long as he can with pure science, but when fatigue sets in, he comes out in the press to wage a relentless war against Gandhian philosophy of life. So science and scientific philosophy are the two poles of his activities.

Saha received his college education at Presidency College which comprised in its staff Sir P. C. Ray as Professor of Chemistry and Sir J. C. Bose as that of Physics. Both the teachers left on his inquisitive mind the stamp of what sustained thinking is. Recollecting this debt, he dedicated (1934) his voluminous book "A Treatise on Modern Physics" to Sir J. C. In 1915 he graduated with the distinction of 1st class second position in Mathematics Honours. He secured the same position in his M. Sc Examination in 1915 with Applied Mathematics as his subject. After such a brilliant career in Mathematics he came to

Professor Ganesh Prosad to do some mathematical research but he lost all taste for mathematics at the dry problems that Dr. Prosad suggested to him. He noticed that his professor's work consisted more or less of finding fault with or offering alternative methods to others' work. This cannot be the product of a creative mind. So he had to abandon his first love and he swung back to Physics. He became his own guide first and his original paper which appeared in the Philosophical Magazine in the year 1919 was on Electrodynamics. It earned for him both the degree of Doctorate of Science and the Premchand Roychand Scholarship. In 1920, he was appointed as a Lecturer in Physics and Applied Mathematics in the Calcutta University. He took his students in confidence to discuss burning problems of Physics. Saha is the kind of worker who is at his best when in a team,—it is not in his nature to work in isolation. 1920 was not only the most fruitful year for him, but a definite landmark in the history of Astrophysics. In a short paper in the Philosophical Magazine ( Vol. 40, p. 472, 1920 ) he expounded his theory of Thermal Ionization. Very few were aware of the epoch-making quality of his investigation.

The atom consists of a massive nucleus with electrons revolving round it in different orbits. The atom is just the replica of the solar system on a very much reduced scale. The atom as a whole is neutral because of the negative charge of the nucleus. Different elements have different number of electrons revolving round the nucleus. If by some process one electron is removed from any atom, the neutrality of the atom is disturbed, the residue atom has an excess of positive charge and is called a positive ion. Ionization means splitting up of a neutral atom into an ion and an electron. If we have a gaseous body at certain pressure, Saha's theory states at what temperature the atoms will be completely broken up into ions.

Different atoms are ionized at different temperatures, the pressure remaining the same in every case. This is the Thermal ionization theory. From a critical study of the quality of light emitted by the stars, we can say what are the elements that remain there in ionic state ; then Saha's theory makes it possible to ascertain the temperature that prevails in the stellar bodies, provided the pressure is known beforehand. In some sort the theory acts as a stellar thermometer.

Saha proceeded to United Kingdom in 1921 and was baptised in Spectroscopy by no less an authority than Professor Alfred Fowler. The worthy professor got a worthy pupil. A co-worker of Professor Fowler's Laboratory remarks : "On thinking back of the relation which existed between Saha and Fowler I am tempted to compare it with that between Maxwell and Faraday." On the way back he came to Germany and worked under Professor W. Nerust in Munich. He was so much impressed by the German system of scientific organization that his love for Germany remained unabated till yesterday, only to-day he is showing signs of transferring it to Russia because the old Germany no longer exists.

On his return he became the Khaira Professor of Physics in Calcutta University. But in 1923, a vacancy occurred in Allahabad, and he moved to Allahabad University to accept the chair of Physics. In Allahabad Saha's interests were directed into two channels—thermal ionization and spectroscopy and the same place may be regarded as the transition point of his entrance into the field of experimental physics. He decided to verify his theory of the thermal ionization in the laboratory, but to make matter boil and glow, like stars in this mundane earth, was a task too arduous for Saha with his meagre resources. More or less he gave up the hope of bringing down a piece of heaven within his room and concentrated all his

energy on spectroscopy, the subject which Prof. Fowler had inspired him with. Then followed a period of six years during which he devoted himself to routine observations of spectral lines and the identification of quantum levels.

In 1927 Saha left India to attend the Volta centenary in Italy and made himself abreast of all advancements in physics by touring extensively and visiting the continental laboratories. He has the highest admiration for Professor Niel Bohr of Copenhagen and opines that he is the guiding genius of European physics. He went to see Bohr at a very transitional period. It was the time when the high hopes that the quantum theory of Bohr promised were proving inadequate for further progress and Schrodinger was holding a new beacon light in the horizon of human thought. Saha with profound interest saw Bohr and Schrodinger discuss the merits of each other's theories and was deeply impressed by the truly scientific spirit in which Bohr rejected his own theory in favour of Schrodinger's Wave-mechanics. He returned home with the conviction that all physical theories must be tackled with the new weapon that Schrodinger has provided us with.

The usual motive for scientific research is the desire for a reputation, as such the output of research by many scientists declines after their appointment as senior professors or directors of institutions or after their election to learned societies. But according to Saha, the cultivation of pure science is necessary for the dignity of the human spirit, pursuit of research provides the only means to achieve mental excellence. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, but he remained after it the same indefatigable worker.

From 1931, Saha became interested in the propagation of radio waves in the atmosphere. There are certain layers at definite heights in the upper atmosphere where atoms are split

up into ions by the action of ultraviolet lights from the sun. It was Saha's intention to explain this stratification, but because of his pre-occupation with writing of books he could not systematically proceed with the work. This same problem is one of his major pursuits even to-day.

Saha's first book, A Treatise on Heat, first appeared in 1931. He was immediately congratulated by Professor R. H. Fowler as having "written a most stimulating version of the old song, 'Heat a Mode of Motion' and written, too, rather in the grand manner". He introduced the subject in such a lucid and coherent style that the book soon ranked itself as the best treatment of the topic. He is now busy making improvements for the third edition of the same. In 1934, followed his second book, A Treatise on Modern Physics. It failed to fulfil the high expectations that the first book aroused in the readers' minds. Professor Andrade was extremely critical about the mode of presentation. One virtue of Saha consists in appreciating healthy criticism and in consequence he is recasting the whole book. Under his leadership, 1935 saw the publication of a scientific semi-popular journal, Science and Culture, which is now occupying a unique position in the international forum as the mouth-piece of Indian Science.

As recipient of the Carnegie Corporation Grant for 1935-36, Saha again sailed for the West, to acquaint himself with the current paths of human thoughts. He reached U. S. A. just in time to attend the Harvard University Centenary celebration. Looking at the equipment of the Universities there he would only toy with the idea if he could have a telescope like the one there in his own country. The ideas in America are infectious, and Saha is most susceptible to them. He returned with the vision of cyclotron feverishly burning in his nerves. It burned and burned till he could find means to realise it.

In 1937, Saha invited Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to preside over the Annual session of the National Academy of Science. Saha and Nehru became two great friends then. He secretly harbours a wish if Nehru could play the role of Lenin in India. In 1938, when the National Planning Committee was inaugurated by Pandit Nehru, he most willingly agreed to become the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Power and Fuel. In that capacity he came to the conclusion that the production of electrical energy in India worked out to be 9 units per capita per year (Cf. U. K.—650, U. S. A.—1,500, Canada—1,700) and he hoped that the output could be increased 50 times within a reasonable period of time.

In 1938, Saha succeeded Professor D. M. Bose as the Palit Professor of Physics at Calcutta University. The laboratory whose charge he then took looked like a museum house. It was the embodiment of scientific interests which had been fixed long before the development of quantum mechanics and cosmic rays. He hates to be stuck up anywhere, he has to move with the currents. Within a year he changed the face of the laboratory and created a new team to march on into the frontier grounds of cosmic rays and nuclear physics. In seminars he initiated flames of discussion and it moved swiftly from one corner to another. With cyclotron to the credit his laboratory is the only one in the East which is so superbly equipped for nuclear physics and cosmic ray work. With the incorporation of one gram of radium and an electron microscope which magnifies objects 100,000 times, his laboratory is soon going to claim an equal footing with any of the West.

Towards the end of 1944, Saha as a delegate of the Scientific Mission, left for U.K. and U.S.A. He championed the case of India's sovereignty with a force which no other scientist ever dared do so. He sternly warned the British public against

their being led astray by the thin veneer of modernism which casual travellers might find in the great cities. He compared India to-day with England that existed in the sixteenth century and added that 90 per cent of the people of India wanted to end life and not live it.

On June 7, 1945, he left for Moscow to attend the 220th anniversary of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Almost in a decade the country has emerged from the "Maelstrom of Medievalism" into high pressure modernism—it was to him a mystery land. The special invitation of President Komarov was too tempting for him to decline. Russia is a great experiment of modern times and he saw with his own eyes that the "Bolsheviks planned like giants and finished like Titans." His views on the success of the experiment are embodied in the series of articles—"My Experiences of Russia".

Saha is advocating for a long time a "policy of progressive electrification of India" because the key to the progress of any modern country lies in the harnessing of natural power to serve human needs. That demands in its turn the multi-purpose development of river-valleys on the lines as demonstrated by the Tennessee Valley Authority (T.V.A.). In short, what he suggests is planned economy for national regeneration of India. Only a National Government can execute such a plan most effectively. That is the angle from which he looks at the freedom of India.

Saha is the Founder-President of the National Academy of Science, and became the President of Indian Science Congress in 1934. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and a perpetual member of the Societe Astronomique de France. He was President of the National Institute of Science and of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. He was the corresponding member of the Deutsche Academy of Science. He holds



**PROFESSOR MEGHNAD SAHA, F. B. S.**

executive positions in ~~several~~ institutions and scientific bodies. Saha is now fifty four years old and enjoys a fine health. If Mr. Eden is the best-tailored politician, he can claim to be the worst-tailored scientist. He has the traditional absent-mindedness of a scientist in all matters other than science. In politics he believes in benevolent despotism and in home he practises it. He is an atheist by choice though the house carries some old remnants of god-head.

Dublin, 1946.

## DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY.

( B. 1882— )

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy is the most celebrated man in medicine in India. He is regarded as the chief medical adviser to the Congress as most of the Congress leaders have chosen to remain under his treatment during illness whether they are in or out of jail. At the same time, he held the presidency of the Indian Medical Council, the highest State-recognised medical board in India. Dr. Roy is regarded as a genius in diagnosis and his medical opinion is most highly valued by the public as well as the officials. But apart from that he is a genius in organisation for public service. He is the guiding spirit in many medical institutions and hospitals and relief organisations. He is also interested in industrial development of the country and is attached to many commercial concerns. He is a man of talents and unbounded energy and a selfless worker in the cause of suffering humanity. He has been a front-ranker in politics for many years as a leader of the Swarajya Party, as an important member of the B. P. C. C. and then as a member of the Working Committee of the Congress and later as the President of the B. P. C. C. He does not hold any office in the Congress now but this is only because he does not choose to remain in the limelight. He has been a notable civic worker and in appreciation of his services the Calcutta Corporation twice elected him as the Mayor. He has himself attained eminence in diverse spheres of activities and at the same time picked up new talents and raised them high providing every facility for self-expression.



Dr Bidhan Chandra Roy



He has no hankering after high office and believes in keeping the path open for the talented young. As a leader of the Indian Medical profession, Dr. Roy was elected the first non-official President of the Indian Medical Council in 1939 and was re-elected in 1945. But he retired after a year from this exalted position just to create a tradition of electing a new president every time. Dr. Roy is a bachelor, but he has been the father of many institutions, which he has nursed under his bracing care. Bidhan Chandra Roy was born on July 1st, 1882, at Bankipur, Patna. His father Late Prakash Chandra Roy was a Deputy Magistrate under the Government of Bengal. Original home of the Roy family was at Taki, Sripur, in the Khulna district and they belong to the family of the descendants of Raja Pratapaditya of Bengal. Bidhan Chandra Roy was the youngest son of his parents. His father Prakash Chandra was a leader of the Brahmo Samaj and as such had to face social persecution in the Hindu society. He was noted for his charity and philanthropy. Bidhan Chandra's mother Aghorekamini also was a pious and kind-hearted lady. There is no doubt that the spirit of public service was imbibed in him in boyhood from his parents.

Bidhan Chandra joined school at Patna and passed the Entrance Examination in the year 1897 in the first division. He graduated in 1901 from the Bankipur College with honours in Mathematics. He then came to Calcutta to study medicine and joined in the Medical College as a student. Bidhan Chandra had a fascination for medicine from his school days. He soon proved himself to be a very brilliant student in the Medical College. He competed in all the examinations and won scholarships and prizes. He passed the final examination in medicine in 1906. He was a very favourite student of the then Principal Dr. Lucis, who appointed him as a House

Physician under him in the Medical College. Dr. Lucis, himself a great medical authority, fully appreciated the talents of his young pupil and trained him in the art of diagnosis of all the difficult cases with earnest zeal. In 1908, Bidhan Chandra was awarded the M. D. degree of the Calcutta University and the University Gold Medal on the basis of his researches in medicine. He now joined the Campbell School as a teacher of medicine. Dr. Roy had an ambition to get acquainted with the latest advances in medicine and surgery in Western countries before he settled down as a full-fledged practitioner and his teacher Dr. Lucis also encouraged him in the idea. In 1909, he went to England and passed the L. R. C. P. and L. R. C. S. examinations of London in the same year. Later in 1911, he appeared in the M. R. J. P. and F. R. C. S. examinations almost simultaneously and came out successful. These fellowships represent highly academic distinctions in medicine and surgery and require highly specialised knowledge in the respective subjects. Very few doctors have earned the honour of attaining both the fellowships. Those who have specialised in medicine know little about surgery, and surgeons are ignorant about medicine—this has been the result of too much specialisation. Though Dr. Roy had previously settled to practise as a physician, he wanted to have a mastery over the science of surgery, because he knew that it would enable him to visualise through the body and make a correct diagnosis.

Dr. Roy returned from England and joined his post as teacher in the Campbell Medical School. He soon developed a lucrative practice and was recognised as one of the eminent physicians in Calcutta. He did not continue in Government service for long. He had a difference of opinion with the white bureaucracy and he tendered his resignation at once. Since then he decided to devote his energy mainly to private

practice. He was invited to accept the Professorship of Medicine in the Carmichael Medical College and joined the institution. He was made Fellow of the State Medical Faculty, Bengal, soon after his return from England. Though Dr. Roy had to remain extremely busy in practice, he was not a man to be occupied within the narrow barriers of his profession. His outlook of life was far wider. He was keenly interested in higher education. He was elected a Fellow of the Calcutta University in 1916 by the votes of registered graduates. He has also served in the Syndicate for several years. He has been in the various Faculties of the Calcutta University at different times. At present he is the Dean of the Faculty of Science. He has been the Chairman of the University Finance Committee for several years. He was appointed as the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University in 1943-44. The Calcutta University conferred on him the honorary D. Sc. degree in 1944 in recognition of his services in the cause of higher learning.

Dr. B. C. Roy is also connected with other educational institutions in the country. He has been the honorary secretary of the Victoria Institution for the last fifteen years and has raised it from the status of a school to that of a first grade college for girls. He is the President of the National Council of Education, Jadavpur.

Dr. Roy entered politics in the twenties and was an ardent follower of Deshabandhu Chittaranjan, Das. He joined the Swarajya party and was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council by nineteen municipalities lying to the east of Hooghly defeating Sir Surendra Nath Banerji, the then minister for Local Self-Government. It was really a unique success for him. He won the election again in 1926 and was returned unopposed in 1929. He was made the Deputy Leader of the

Swarajya Party under late C. R. Das. He was the General Secretary of the Reception Committee of the Indian National Congress held in Calcutta in 1928 and was responsible to a great measure for the success of the session. He has been an influential member of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for a long period. In 1930, during the Civil Disobedience Movement Dr. Roy was called upon to become a member of the Working Committee of the Congress which had been declared illegal in the meantime. He was arrested in Delhi with the Congress President Dr. M. A. Ansari and other members of the Working Committee. He had to serve a term of imprisonment for six months from August 1930 to January 1931. He was in Delhi jail for some time and then transferred to the Alipore Central Jail, Calcutta. After the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1934, Dr. Roy together with Dr. M. A. Ansari tried to revive the Swarajya Party with a view to wreck the new constitution which was in the offing, by entering into the assemblies. But later on, when Congress itself decided in favour of Council entry, the idea was given up. Dr. Roy was elected as the President of the B. P. C. C. in 1935 when the province was without a leader due to the death of Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta—Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose living in exile in Europe. But as we know, he had no fascination for high office and retired as soon as Sj. Bose and other leaders came out of imprisonment. Apart from direct political activities, he has given valuable service to the nation by acting as medical adviser to our aged national leaders. The late Pt. Matilal Nehru made open references to this aspect of Dr. Roy's services to the nation in his speeches in Calcutta. During the last days of Gandhiji's fast in 1948 at Aga Khan's Palace, Dr. Roy attended him at the request of the Government. Of course he had treated Gandhiji many times before. A few days before Gandhiji was released



early in 1945 on grounds of health, Dr. Roy had examined him again at Government's request and submitted his medical report. Dr. Roy has been the organiser of Congress Medical Mission to China in 1938. The present Congress Medical Mission to Malaya also has been organised by him.

Being an eminent physician, Dr. Roy has taken special interests in the institutions for the alleviation of human sufferings. He has been the General Secretary of Tuberculosis Association, Bengal, from its inception. He is also a member and trustee of the Calcutta Medical Aid and Research Society and as such he is one of the founders of the Jadavpur Tuberculosis Hospital and Sanatorium. He donated a large sum to pay for the deficit in the recurring expenses of the hospital for the first two years. He is still the guiding spirit behind the organisation. Dr. Roy is a trustee of the Chittaranjan Seva Sadan. He has organised this institution to be one of the biggest hospitals in India for maternity care and female diseases. He has been mainly responsible for its present expansion of the X-ray and Radium Department and Children's hospital. A cancer hospital is also being organised by him in that institution.

He has been connected with the Carmichael Medical College and hospitals for thirty years and is still rendering active honorary service as a teacher and an organiser in all directions. In addition to these, various other medical institutions have been benefited by Dr. Roy's help and patronage. Dr. Roy has long been interested in civic work. He served as an Alderman in the Calcutta Corporation for several years, and was unanimously elected as the Mayor of Calcutta in 1931, and then re-elected in 1932.

Dr. Roy's genius in the organisation of social service is well-known. During the Bengal famine of 1943 and its aftermath of epidemics, the medical aid officially organised by the Govern-

ment was quite inadequate for the purpose. The Bengal Medical Relief Co-ordination Committee was organised under the chairmanship of Dr. Roy to co-ordinate the work of various non-official relief committees sponsored by numerous political and non-political parties. This organisation has done yeoman's service for the disease-stricken people of Bengal.

Dr. Roy served in the Post-war Medical Reconstruction Committee known as the Bhow Committee, whose report has been very recently published. As the president of the Indian Medical Council, he has greatly influenced the framing up of the plan and is responsible for much of the detailed scheme which would cost rupees one thousand crores specially for the Medical relief to the poor.

Though very busy in his own profession, Dr. Roy has been actively connected with a large number of industrial concerns, which he guides. He is the chairman of the board of directors of the Shillong Hydro-electric Ltd., Gauhati Electric Supply, Riverside (Bhatpara) Electric Co., Ltd., Mymensingh Electric Co., Ltd., Development of Industries (India) Ltd., Oriental Mercantile Co., Ltd., Cooch Behar State Tobacco Co., Ltd., etc. He is also a director of Hindustan Co-operative Insurance Society Ltd. He has acted as friend, philosopher and guide to many indigenous pharmaceutical concerns and has thus given fillip to the Indian pharmaceutical industry.

Dr. Roy is a lover of sports and finds time to witness all important games held in Calcutta. He has been the president of the Bengal Gymkhana Club and many other clubs also enjoy his patronage. He has acted as a judge settling many disputes which frequently occur in the sports world. Dr. Roy has been intensely interested in cricket since his college days.

Although Dr. Roy is now 64 years old, he is still full of vigour and energy like a youngman. He has devoted a great

## **DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY**

portion of his energy to public service taking special interest in the institutions for the alleviation of human sufferings. His life is a glorious example to the younger generations, in the medical profession. In this unhappy disease-stricken land of ours, men of Dr. Roy's talents and spirit are sorely needed to bring about a healthy and happy India.

# SAROJINI NAIDU.

( B. 1879— )

## I

Most people in Northern India do not know that Sarojini Naidu is Bengali by birth ; yet true to her race she has been a quiet revolutionary in her ways. The daughter of a Bengali Brahmin, she has married a non-Brahmin from the South ; inheriting the Bengali speech, she has chosen to speak and write in an alien tongue ; a mother, she has dedicated herself to the cause of India's freedom ; a political figure, she has expressed herself better in poems than in deeds.

If India can boast of some half a dozen outstanding women of our time, no small part of the credit goes to Sarojini Naidu. She is still the best known and most travelled Indian woman and she has been a guide to our womanhood for over three decades. Thanks to her courage and imagination, Indian women are now voicing "Our Cause" with a steady confidence. Gone are the days when Indian women behind the Purdah thought it their mission to bear and rear children. Without ceasing to be mothers they are now training themselves for a better life. They are making themselves felt in almost every sphere of life. Sarojini has been, somehow, the herald of this awakened Indian womanhood.

## II

Sarojini was born at Hyderabad (Deccan) on February 18, 1879. Her father Dr. Aghorenath Chatterjee founded the Nizam's College ; he lived and worked for the spread of education in the Deccan. This Brahmin from East Bengal



Sarciu • Na du



studied at Bonn and won the D. Sc. degree of Edinburgh on the strength of his chemical researches. But western science alone did not engage his entire energy and attention; an excellent Sanscrit Scholar, he read deeply into Eastern religion and philosophy. He had a Homeric profile and indulged in Homeric laughter that shook his great white beard and almost brought the roof down. His tremendous high spirits still live in his daughter. Sarojini's mother was a sensitive lady who had written some lovely Bengali poems in her youth. Is it altogether too fanciful to sense the mother's spirit in the poetry of Sarojini and her brother, Harindrapath Chatterjee?

So Sarojini was fortunate in her parents. Brought up in such an intellectual environment, she matured earlier than most children. We are not surprised to learn that little Sarojini took herself seriously, wrote poetry, drama, fiction, kept fat journals and matriculated at the tender age of twelve. Before she was sixteen she won a State Scholarship and sailed for England where she stayed for three years.

The friendship of such distinguished Englishmen of letters as Edmund Gosse and Arthur Symonds have hardly been less valuable to Sarojini than the academic terms she kept at Kings College, London and at Girton College, Cambridge. Her friends in England were struck by her frail body, sweet voice and wise looks; so grown up she looked for her years. And they loved the poet in her. The strain of her studies, however, was too much for her delicate health and she broke down. After a short visit to Italy, she returned home to India in September 1898.

On her return to India, Sarojini married Dr. M. Govinda Rajlu Naidu, Principal Medical Officer to the Nizam. But her duties as wife and mother have not snatched her from the wider movements of our country. On the contrary, she has

been the very salt of our political and social life. Her work for the P. E. N. Organisation, for the Hyderabad Flood Relief Organisation, for the Womens' Conference, her delegation to South Africa and to the Round Table Conference—to mention only a few of her activities—deserve the greatest rewards.

Do you think that saddled with so many tasks Sarojini cannot find time for home and happiness? You are wrong; listen to this. ".....The very spirit of delight that Shelley wrote of dwells in my little home. It is full of music of birds in the garden and children in the long arched verandah" (Sarojini to Symons).

## III

It was but natural that the political subjection of India should have troubled the sensitive Sarojini to an unusual degree. In a galaxy of political luminaries like Gandhiji, Pt. Nehru and Subhas Bose she may not attract any special attention. She has no social gospel to preach, no political theory to vindicate, no astounding lead to give. Yet in her quiet devotion to the Indian National Congress (which she joined forty years ago) is to be found a most admirable fusion of passion and understanding. A passion for freedom, strong in the heart of every mortal, burns in a poetic soul with a steady flame and many waters cannot quench it. Understanding, that precious gift, is sadly to seek in a crowd; but it is given to an intellectual to isolate himself, to resist the herd, to analyse, to obey, to persist.

It is this unique blending of head and heart, of passion and understanding; this complete personality that we call Sarojini that has made her significant in the context of our struggle for freedom. That our country has been aware of this significance was made abundantly clear in 1925 when she was elected



president of the National Congress. Before her only one woman, Dr. Annie Besant, had held that exalted office and after her we have not had a woman to preside over the deliberations of the Congress. She continues to be the only woman member of the Congress Working Committee ; and her position in that body appeared prejudicial to the maintenance of Law and Order to the British Government in India in August 1942. So she was arrested and interned with Gandhiji at the Aga Khan Palace in Bombay. Later on she was released on grounds of health.

#### IV

Today Sarojini is sixtyseven but young as ever. She is young not with the inexperience of youth, but with its energy. Madame Edib speaks of her wonderful personality and compares her with Shakespeare's vision of Cleopatra :

"Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety".

Indeed a certain imperiousness and humour, together with a marvellous voice, almost make a queen of her. Once she was besieged in New York by an army of American Press reporters who shouted : "What do you think of Katherine Mayo ?" This daughter of Mother India, nothing daunted, made this queenly reply : "Katherine Mayo ! Who is she ?" That was indeed Miss Mayo's fittest epitaph.

This glow and warmth of her radiant soul lifts her speeches above mere peroration and invests them with a sense of timelessness. And she is quite the best speaker we have in India today. Of course we remember Sir Sarvapalli and Pandit Nehru while we make this claim. Her Presidential address to the Indian National Congress in 1925 is more than a

political document ; it is a piece of literature. Her words and phrases, like those of Burke, continually recur to our memory. In the struggle for freedom, she said, fear is the one forgiveable sin and treachery the one unforgiveable crime. Dare we forget that ?

Sarojini's election to the fellowship of the Royal Society of Literature in 1914 was not, as most elections to such bodies are, an act of courtesy. It was an act of supererogation ; for Sarojini is an extremely good, if not a great poet. It is the Poet in her that has overcome the inevitable monotony of organisation and filled the National Congress with ardour and aspiration. When India is free we shall not converse with the so-called greatmen of today. We shall simply remember them for what they have been worth. But Sarojini will live on and speak to us across the gulf of history. That is the privilege of a Poet.

## V

Race, heredity, genius—all these have conspired to make Sarojini a full-throated singer. Her poetry, as Symonds put it, has the quality of bird-song. In all conscience this quality is not abundant in the modern muse. She uses rich, sensuous, and colourful imagery, which has a peculiar appeal for all Eastern people. Indeed there is very little that is English about her poetry, unless, of course, it is the language ; for the early influence of Shelley and Keats makes her poetry no more English than it makes Tagore's.

Sarojini belongs to the Romantic camp ( her first poem came to her while she was sighing over a sum in Algebra ) and these lines, quoted by one of her English admirers, might have been Shelly's gift.

"The solace of faith to the lips that falter,  
The Succour of hope to the hands that fail,  
The tidings of joy when Peace shall triumph,  
When truth shall conquer, and Love prevail".

"Behold : I rise to meet the destined Spring,  
And scale the stars upon my broken wing".

So the bird of time crosses the golden threshold on the broken wing. Her cry is not as keen as Shelly's ; but she is not given to his soft self-pity either. And she loads every rift with ore. Her delight in colour and music reminds us of Keats and Swinburne. But it will not do to dismiss her as an Indian Pre-Raphaelite ; she never wanted to be the idle singer of an empty day. The Rajput ballad, the folk-song of the Frontier, the greatness that is Mogul India—all this meets and merges in the rising tide of nationalism and relates her to much Bengali poetry of the recent past.

No Englishman, however gifted and equipped, can possibly do justice to Sarojini's poetry. Its background and perspective are entirely eastern. Perhaps the most acceptable judgment on her work was passed when Satyen Datta translated some of her lyrics into Bengali, the mother tongue of both poet and translator.

Sarojini has expressed herself better in poems than in deeds. She has always burned to write a great poem, rather than to do something great. She dreams of the past and of the future. Memory and hope : these are the stuff of her many speeches and poems.

"From groves of spice,  
O'er fields of rice,  
Athwart the lotus-stream,

## EMINENT INDIANS

I bring for you  
Aglint with dew  
A little lovely dream

Every poet is a dreamer of dreams. He is also the unacknowledged legislature of the world. He is the point at which society becomes most conscious of its aspirations. Long after a poet is dead a statesman will be born to realise the dream and plant it in the soil of reality. So dreams are not dreams. They are seeds of reality waiting for the wand of time to put on the most magnificent leaves and flowers. We do not know when or how ; but we all know that this will happen. Sarojini has convinced us.

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